

The Chat

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Briefs for the Files

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2016 Spring Migration Counts in North Carolina

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Although Wake County discontinued its count this year, the addition of Pilot Mountain State Park kept the count areas at a total of twenty-one. Total species (242) was slightly lower than the past couple of years, but about average for the past six years when there were 20 to 22 count areas. Total individual bird numbers (89,352) was also about average for that period. Although species and individual totals were average, participation (429 participants) was lower than it has been since 2011, but total effort was still about average with 1349.55 team-hours (a.k.a. party-hours) tabulated, so teams made up for the loss of participation by putting in additional time.

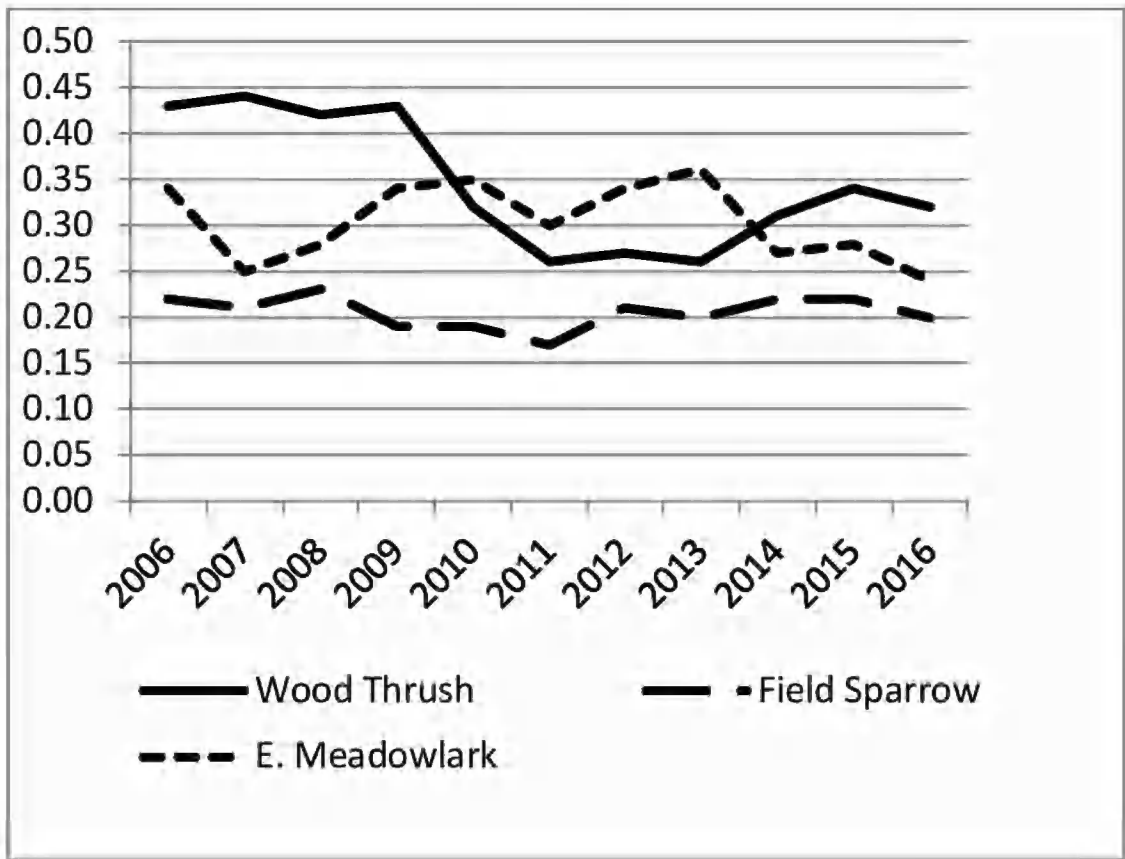
Some species that were located in only one count area included Connecticut and Nashville Warbler in Henderson County; American Pipit in Mecklenburg County; Bufflehead in Forsyth County; Lark Sparrow at Southern Pines; King Rail, Common Gallinule, and Rusty Blackbird at Chapel Hill; Lesser Scaup at Falls Lake; Common Merganser, Red-throated Loon, and Pacific Loon at Kerr Lake; and, being the only coastal count, many species in Onslow County. Some of the best coastal count species were Eared Grebe, Parasitic Jaeger, and White-rumped Sandpiper. Unlike the interesting showing of Mississippi Kites last year, none showed up for count day this year, and the massive showing of Pine Siskins on almost all of the counts in 2015 was also missing this year. Only a few counts outside of the mountain region, where they occur regularly, reported any siskins at all.

Most of the species that were found on every count are permanent residents throughout the state such as Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, American Goldfinch, Eastern Towhee and Northern Cardinal, but a few are migrants throughout all or most of the state including Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, and Indigo Bunting. A couple are also largely migratory but also present in low to very low numbers in winter, especially in the mountains, such as Gray Catbird and Common Yellowthroat.

Most abundant species in NC, i.e. totals greater than 2000, were also for the most part species that are common throughout the state including Northern Cardinal (3886), American Robin (2869), American Crow (2741), European Starling (2570), Common Grackle (2400), Tufted Titmouse

(2106), Canada Goose (2106), and American Goldfinch (2025). The second most abundant species, however, was Double-crested Cormorant (3230), a species whose numbers dwindle quickly away from the coastal plain, but are extremely abundant along the coast.

There has been concern over the decline of certain species in the United States over the past few decades including some that are North Carolina breeding birds. The chart below shows three of these species, Wood Thrush, Field Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark, and how their numbers have fluctuated from 2006 to 2016 based on North Carolina Spring Count data. Data used are individuals per party-hour, which is calculated by dividing the total number of that species found divided by the total field hours for that spring count. This levels a playing field that might otherwise be affected by variations in observer participation, as teams spend different numbers of hours in the field from one year to the next.



As can be seen, Field Sparrow numbers have remained stable over this period, while Wood Thrush and Meadowlark numbers have fluctuated slightly. Wood Thrush numbers were at what was probably their all-time low to date on NC spring counts from 2011 to 2013 and have bounced back slightly since then. Meadowlark numbers seem to continue to be in decline. All three of these species exhibited far greater numbers in North Carolina in the 1960s based on spring count data. Of course North Carolina has changed considerably since then, and both woodland and open country birds have suffered from loss of habitat, but some species have been far more affected than others. It is good to see that at least numbers do seem to have stabilized somewhat over the past decade for some species.

Details of individual counts including names of compilers and participants, as well as count highlights and a list of species found exclusively on that count, follow.

Mountains

Transylvania County – Count date May 1st, 122 species, 4239 individuals, 22 participants in 12 parties and 1 feeder-watcher, 84.00 party-hours. Elevation ranges from 2100 to 5600 ft. Weather: clear, little wind, weather variable with elevation, 30-60° F.

Compiler: Norma Siebenheller (sieb@citcom.net)

Participants: Marvin Barg, Michele Barg, Dick Blee, Sylvia Blee, Linda Cooper, Bruce Cox, Nancy Cowal, Susan Goldsworthy, May Goring, Al Hooper, Chris Jaquette, Mike Judd, Nora Murdock, Janie Owens, Michael Plauche, Bill Siebenheller, Norma Siebenheller, Mark Simpson, Simon Thompson, Charlie Threatte, Linda Threatte, Marilyn Westphal

Exclusives: none

Notes: Despite the fact that some of our regulars were unable to take part this year, this turned out to be one of our most successful counts ever in Transylvania. New birders joined us, while others from surrounding counties pitched in to help; the weather was pleasant; the birds were cooperative; and the end result was the third-highest total — 122 species — that we have achieved since the count began in 1973. Highlights included the first Greater Scaup for our list and the first Lincoln's Sparrow. We were delighted at the sighting of an immature Bald Eagle in Balsam Grove and two Northern Saw-whet Owls at a known breeding site along the Parkway. Twenty-five species of warblers were recorded, some of them in very good numbers. A singing Summer Tanager was a surprise. And the Great Blue Heron rookery continues to grow: 50 birds were counted at the Ecusta Pond site this year.

Of course, there are always disappointments — we missed Green Heron, American Kestrel, Wild Turkey, Purple Martin, and Eastern Screech-Owl...but that's the nature of this game. Someday everything will go right, and we'll reach the magic number of 130. But for now, we're happy with 122. It was a great day.

Norma Siebenheller

Pisgah Ridge, Great Balsam and Plott Balsam Mountains IBA – Count dates spanned from May 19-22 with teams selecting one of those days to do their section, 75 species, 2950 individuals, 25 participants in 11 parties, 84.00 party-hours. Elevation ranges for this count run from 3500 to 6100 feet.

Weather: mostly cloudy to clear, but cool with temperatures from 40 to 60°F and winds from 10 to 15mph.

Compiler: Marilyn Westphal (mjwestph@ret.unca.edu)

Participants: Tim Carstens, Nancy Casey, Laura Eldridge, Robert Emmott, Tom Flagg, Kirk Gardner, Jamie Harrelson, Robert Johnson, Stacy Johnson, Gail Lankford, Charlie Lankford, Andrew Laughlin, Nora Murdock, Joseph Nolan, Naomi Otterness, Catherine Reid, Russell Roe, Mark Simpson, Tom Tribble, Lou Weber, Marilyn Westphal, Connie Wulcovicz and Stan Wulcovicz

Exclusives: none

Notes: A very cool May followed a very warm April, and the cool weather and somewhat windy conditions at times may have reduced birding activity. Species total was lower than average as were total individuals. There were no first time species for this count, but Red-winged Blackbird was found for only the second time. Although Red-winged Blackbirds are common in the valleys, they are rather rare at the elevations where this count largely occurs. Bald Eagle was found only for the fourth time. Peregrine Falcons returned to nest at Devil's Courthouse after several years' absence. Alder and Least Flycatchers were, once again, present in good numbers. Late migrants included a Cape May and a Bay-breasted Warbler.

Dark-eyed Junco (310), Eastern Towhee (278), and Chestnut-sided Warbler (275) were the most common species found, as is usually the case, followed by Blue-headed Vireo (198), Black-throated Green Warbler (168), Golden-crowned Kinglet (149), Canada Warbler (122), Veery (120), American Robin (114), and Black-throated Blue Warbler (105).

The most unusual miss was Barred Owl, although 3 Northern Saw-whet Owls were counted at known nesting sites. Numbers of most species were in the average range, but Rose-breasted Grosbeak numbers have been somewhat down the last couple of years.

Once again, despite the weather, everyone had a great time birding in this beautiful area. Many thanks again to all the participants.

Marilyn Westphal

Henderson County – Count date period from May 13th to May 16th (teams select which date to do their count), 105 species, 2799 individuals, 17 participants in 11 areas, 48.95 party-hours. Weather: no data

Compiler: Jim Neal (jlbjneal@gmail.com)

Participants: D Bauknight, Vicky Burke, Liz Fitts, Joyce Gray, Ginger Hadley, Shirley Hastings, Jill Heishman, Rich Leppingwell, Nora Murdock, Barbara Neal, Jim Neal, Janie Owens, Carol Palmer, Don Palmer, Cherie Pitillo, Mark Simpson and Marilyn Westphal

Exclusives: Connecticut Warbler, Nashville Warbler

Notes: The 105 species is somewhat higher than our low of 95 species set last year. The highest was in 2006 when 120 species were found in nine areas. The 2799 total birds are slightly above the midpoint between our low of 1612 in 2014 and the high of 3904 in 2012.

There were six species with more than 100 individuals. The Northern Cardinal at 143 was first followed by Eastern Towhee (139),

American Crow (135), Canada Goose (120), Song Sparrow (122), and Red-eyed Vireo (104). Cedar Waxwing was close with 97.

Normally we get around 20 species of warblers, and this year we found 21. Black-throated Green Warbler and Ovenbird tied for the most abundant at 58, followed closely by Hooded Warbler at 55. Black-and-white Warbler at 30 and Northern Parula at 26 completed the top five.

Other really good species found included Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, Connecticut and Canada Warblers, and Bobolink. I want to thank all those who helped with the count, particularly the several new people, for an excellent job.

Jim Neal

Buncombe County – Count date centered on May 7th, 110 species, 4915 individuals, 22 participants in 9 parties, 65.50 party-hours. Weather: mostly cooler than average over the count period, cloudy to partly cloudy, windy at higher elevations.

Compiler: Tom Tribble (tntribble@gmail.com)

Participants: Tom Bush, Nancy Casey, Nancy Cowal, Robert Emmott, Jamie Harrelson, Doug Johnston, Gail Lankford, Herman Lankford, Nora Murdock, Janie Owens, Liz Payne, Cherrie Pitillo, J Rittenburg, Russell Roe, Steve Semanchuk, Mark Simpson, Liz Skiles, Emilie Travis, Tom Tribble, Marilyn Westphal, Jay Wherley, and Steve Yurkovich

Exclusives: Northern Harrier

Notes: none

Black Mountains IBA – Count period ran from May 26th to May 31st with teams selecting one of those days to complete their section, 68 species, 2299 individuals, 15 participants in 12 parties with some teams covering a second section on a different day, 45.60 party-hours. Weather: unusually pleasant weather over the count period, cool in the morning and warm in the afternoon, mostly calm and clear. Elevation range for this count is 3000 to 6684 ft. with most of the count area above 4000 ft. This count has been conducted since 2006 with 2008 missed because of road closures.

Compiler: Marilyn Westphal (mjwestph@ret.unca.edu)

Participants: Luke Cannon, Laura Eldridge, Robert Emmott, Jamie Harrelson, Doug Johnston, Charlie Lankford, Gail Lankford, Andrew Laughlin, Nora Murdock, Steve Semanchuk, Mark Simpson, Liz Skiles, Simon Thompson, Marilyn Westphal and Yuri Woodstock.

Exclusives: none

Notes: Mount Mitchell spring weather can be very unstable, but this year participants were fortunate to experience some of the most pleasant weather ever during a count period. The great weather and excellent participation yielded the highest species count (68) thus far for this area. Only one new species for the count (Great Crested Flycatcher) was found, and the only first miss was Mourning Dove. Fourteen species had the highest number over the

ten years of this count while none of those regularly found were included in the lowest numbers.

Much of the area covered in this count is high elevation spruce/fir habitat and the most frequently found species are those common to that habitat. This year, as usual, the top ten species were largely dominated by spruce/fir specialists and included Dark-eyed Junco (314), Black-throated Green Warbler (181), Golden-crowned Kinglet (175), Blue-headed Vireo (148), Canada Warbler (134), Black-throated Blue Warbler (111), Veery (99), Red-breasted Nuthatch (84), American Robin (83), and Blackburnian Warbler (83).

No unusual species were found, but Alder and Least Flycatchers returned as did Yellow-rumped Warbler, all species that seem to breed in the area only sporadically. Thrush numbers were very good this year with a record 99 Veeries and 68 Hermit Thrushes. On the other hand, Swainson's Thrushes, which have been suspected of breeding in the area for the past nine or ten years, seem to be declining. Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins were present in good numbers this year. One male calling Northern Saw-whet Owl was heard, and another nesting female were excellent for the count.

Many thanks once again to all the participants. This count requires some significant hiking over sometimes steep and/or rocky trails, so their efforts are always greatly appreciated.

Marilyn Westphal

Grandfather Mountain IBA - Count date May 13th, 61 species, 604 individuals, 3 participants in 2 parties, 15.50 party-hours. Weather: mostly cloudy with intermittent light rain.

Compiler: Mickey Shortt Jr. (mickey@grandfather.com)

Participants: Miriam Avello, Robin Diaz, Mickey Shortt Jr.

Exclusives: none

Notes: We conducted the 2016 spring bird count under mostly cloudy skies and intermittent light rain. We counted on two routes: along the NC-105 corridor west of Grandfather Mountain and along the Grandfather Trail. The weather affected our count, and numbers of individuals were roughly half of the previous year's count for the same routes. Two other routes were not covered due to leaders being out of town.

NC-105 Corridor Route: This route begins at Church Road in Foscoe and continues along NC-105 until the intersection with Hwy-221, including the lower part of Profile Trail and parking area. It then follows 221 toward Grandfather Mountain SF and .75 miles along Old Yonahlossee Highway. Inside Grandfather Mountain SF, coverage is the main road, the museum and Black Rock parking areas and all available pull-off areas. After covering Grandfather Mountain SF, the route continues along 221 toward the Blue Ridge Parkway, with three stops at pull-off areas. The last stop is the Beacon Heights parking area and the opposite vegetation, as well as the lower part of the Beacon Heights Trail. The list from the last stop is shared

with Bob Cherry, who covers this area more thoroughly. Coverage for this route includes pull-off areas along the roads, bog and wet areas and accessible woods, such as those behind Lowe's Foods. Birds heard or seen during the drive are tallied.

Notes: A Pine Siskin was observed making a nest on this route. A Magnolia Warbler was spotted at Beacon Heights singing; this is a fairly common occurrence in recent years. We continue to document singing Magnolia Warblers on Grandfather Mountain consistently.

Grandfather Trail Route: This route covered the Grandfather Mountain ridge on foot from the Top Shop parking area to the Boone Fork parking area on the Blue Ridge Parkway by way of the Grandfather, Cragway and Nuwati Trails. The beginning of the route is through a spruce-fir forest with high-elevation rocky outcroppings along the route. After Calloway Peak's Fraser Fir community, the route passes through a northern hardwood forest and eventually descends along heath to the Boone Fork stream. The route begins at over 5200 feet in elevation and crosses over Calloway Peak (5946 feet) before finishing around 3900 feet on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Notes: After a really high count of Yellow-rumped Warblers last year, we didn't have any spotted along the Grandfather Trail route.

Mickey Short Jr.

Hanging Rock State Park IBA – Count date May 11th, 85 species, 899 individuals, 13 participants in 8 parties, 20.00 party-hours. Elevation range 1200-2400 feet. Weather: sunny

Compiler: Jean Chamberlain (jchamberlain1@windstream.net)

Participants: Jean Chamberlain, Nita Colvin, Allison Gagnon, Brent Gearhart, Carol Gearhart, Lisa Gould, Elnora Gore, Derek Hudgins, Don Lendle, Ron Morris, Laura Phail, Cara Woods and Tony Woods.

Exclusives: none

Notes: We counted 85 species including 17 species of warbler. The most notable sighting was Swainson's Warbler for the second year in a row. The most notable species missed was Common Raven, probably because Cooks Wall was not covered.

Jean Chamberlain

Piedmont

Iredell County – Count date April 24th, 94 species, 2360 individuals, 10 participants, 25.00 party-hours. Weather: 38-75° F, glorious sunny day, best one we have enjoyed in years. Count area: Circle centered on South Yadkin River Bridge - Chipley Ford Road in Northern Iredell County.

Compiler: Garnet Underwood (guwood@gmail.com)

Participants: Debbie Birnley, Cynthia Dickerson, Bill English, Jack Greene, Lee Hollifield, Larry Marlin, Janice Powell, Garnet Underwood, Ron Underwood and Mark Whittaker

Exclusives: none

Notes: Notable birds included Pine Siskin, Yellow-throated Vireo, Cape May Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Worm-eating Warbler, but only one Northern Bobwhite.

Garnet Underwood

Mecklenberg County – Count date April 24th, 131 species, 6698 individuals, 28 participants, 86.15 party-hours.

Compiler: Jeff Lemons (birdsalot@gmail.com)

Participants: Larry Barden, Louise Barden, Bill Blakesley, Laura Blakesley, Robert Bustle, Jan Fowler, Phil Fowler, Robert Gilson, Jim Guyton, Dennis Kent, Ken Kneidel, Lenny Lampel, Jeff Lemons, Kevin Metcalf, Martina Nordstrand, Jill Palmer, Taylor Piephoff, Lucy Quintilliano, Barry Rowan, Ian Ruppenthal, Tammy Sanders, Tom Sanders, John Scavetto, Don Seriff, Steve Tracy, Judy Walker, David Wright and Marcia Wright.

Exclusives: American Pipit

Notes: none

Pilot Mountain State Park – Count date May 3rd, 114 species, 1903 individuals, 6 participants, 26.10 party-hours. Surry County - Pilot Mountain is the count center. Weather: temperature 68°- 81°F, wind 2-7 mph, cloudy in morning, partly cloudy in afternoon with traces of precipitation throughout the day.

Compiler: Jesse Anderson (jesse.anderson@ncparks.gov) Participants: Jesse Anderson, Brian Bockhahn, Jean Chamberlain, Mike Conway, Cara Woods, Tony Woods

Exclusives: none

Notes: none

Forsyth County – Count date May 7th, 129 species, 5349 individuals, 52 participants in 12 teams, 100.50 party-hours. Weather: partly cloudy, temperature 55-73°F, light winds.

Compiler: Ron Morris (ronmorris@triad.rr.com)

Participants: Mary Franklin Blackburn, Kim Brand, Malcolm Brown, Jean Chamberlain, Nita Colvin, Mike Conway, Doug Demerest, Sam Dempsy, David Disher, Cynthia Donaldson, Kerry Eckhardt, Dee Edelman, Nathan Gatto, Brent Gearhart, Carol Gearhart, Finn Geigengack, Lisa Gould, John Haire, Sven Halling, Elaine Hammond, John Hammond, Susan Hammond, Hop Hopkins, Royce Hough, Derek Hudgins, Don Kautz, Don Lendle, Chi Lo, Jim Martin, Craig McCleary, Marilyn McDonald, Heather Moir, Ron Morris, Ann Newsome, Laura Phail, Melanie Price, Jeremy Reiskind, Shelley Rutkin, Lee Salisbury, Gene Schepker, Lois Schneider, Jim Spencer, Philip Stewart, Bill Sugg, Chuck Thompson, Cindy Thompson, Andrew Thornton, Katherine Thorington, Gray Tuttle, Jay Wilhelmi, Cara Woods, and Tony Woods.

Exclusives: Redhead

Highlights: Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were absent for the first time in 25 years. A female Redhead at Archie Elledge Waste Water Treatment plant was the first for this count. A Marsh Wren at the Tanglewood wetland was the first in 21 years (1996). Red-shouldered Hawks tied last year's record of 21. Killdeer (15) were at the lowest number in this count history. Least Sandpipers (62) had the second highest count on record; the record is 78 in 2000. Barred Owls tied the record of 10 set in 2014. Downy Woodpeckers had the second highest number (46) after the record of 55 in 2005. Pileated Woodpeckers had the second highest number (8) after the record of 10 in 2005. Good numbers of flycatchers were recorded, with 18 Eastern Wood-Pewees, 7 Acadian Flycatchers, 33 Eastern Phoebe, 27 Great Crested Flycatchers, and 40 Eastern Kingbirds. White-eyed Vireos set a new record at 26; the previous record of 21 was set in 2004. Fewer than ten White-eyed Vireos are recorded in most years.

Red-eyed Vireos (117) broke the record of 108 set in 1996. In most years, fewer than 80 are reported. Purple Martins were reported in the highest number (47) in 13 years. Wood Thrushes were present in the second highest number (38) since 2005, when 47 were reported just prior to a sharp decline over the next several years. Gray Catbirds set a record with 96. A single Tennessee Warbler was only the third reported on this count in 25 years. Chestnut-sided Warblers tied the record of 18 set in 1993. Cape May Warblers (30) were present in the highest numbers since the early 1990s when 35-48 were reported three consecutive years. In most years, fewer than ten Cape Mays are found. Fifteen Black-throated Green Warblers were the most reported since 17 were recorded in 1992. Thirty-five American Redstarts were the most found since 53 were counted in 1992. Just three Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported, but that's still the second highest number for this species. Five Louisiana Waterthrushes were recorded in 2005. Forty-four Scarlet Tanagers were reported, with an impressive 24 on the Bethabara route alone. Grasshopper Sparrows set a new record at 16. Orchard Orioles broke the record with 24. House Sparrows (7) broke last year's record low of 12. This species continues a steady decline since 59 were recorded in 1992.

The ten most numerous species were Northern Cardinal (313), European Starling (282), American Robin (234), Chimney Swift (233), Common Grackle (218), Cedar Waxwing (208), Canada Goose (151), American Goldfinch (149), Barn Swallow (143), and Carolina Wren (139).

Ron Morris

Rockingham County – Count date May 5th, 100 species, 1144 individuals, 5 participants in 4 parties, 27.98 party-hours. Weather: a massive cold front came through with rain, clouds, light wind, and temperature 46-55°F.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Penny Barham, Brian Bockhahn, Matt Wangerin, Cara Woods and Tony Woods.

Exclusives: Bufflehead, Merlin

Notes: The fourth Rockingham County spring count was held during horrid weather, but despite the conditions several good birds were found.

First count records include Bufflehead in the Dan River section, a Ruffed Grouse at the far north end of the circle that was a dawn surprise, a pre-dawn Common Nighthawk, and a single Merlin over the Mayodan Water Treatment Plant ponds. The plant also had a single Blue-winged Warbler and a single Cerulean Warbler. A lone singing Tennessee Warbler was found along Anglin Mill Road and posed for photos and video, and a single Dark-eyed Junco was seen near Deshazo Road at the waterfall parking area.

Second count records include Yellow-throated Warbler, which is harder to find in this “foothills” habitat, three Cape May Warblers around Mayo Mountain area, and a single singing Canada Warbler in the northern part of the circle off Smith Road in definite “foothills” habitat.

Misses include regular participant Martin Wall, who probably could have gotten all of our misses off a nest with a flashlight at night! Weather-related A-list misses include Northern Bobwhite, Double-crested Cormorant, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Chuck-will’s-widow, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow and Prairie Warbler, Summer Tanager, and Blue Grosbeak.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count.

Brian Bockhahn

Greensboro – Count date April 24th, 133 species, 8552 individuals, 36 participants, 112.50 party-hours. Weather: high temperature 65°F, low 58°F, foggy, light, variable winds.

Compiler: Elizabeth Link (elzlink@yahoo.com)

Participants: Nancy Adamson, Carolyn Allen, Diana Bowman, Dennis Burnette, Lynn Burnette, Frank Cashwell, Sue Cole, Rebecca Dellinger, Scott DePue, Jim Eldrett, Amy Hanson, Judy Hoag, Craig Lawrence, Jane Lawrence, Elizabeth Link, Henry Link, Clarence Mattocks, Ron Morris, Lynn Moseley, Jean Murdick, Lauren Murdick, Roberta Newton, Lane Oldham, Ann Presnell, Danny Royster, Wallace Sills, Jim Strickland, Ann Stieghner, Emily Talbert, Andrew Thornton, Emily Tyler, Ann Van Sant, Matt Wangerin, George Wheaton, Melissa Whitmire, and Peggy Young.

Exclusives: none

Notes: The weather for count day had been forecast to produce showers and thunderstorms in the afternoon, but fortunately those didn’t materialize. Instead we had a day of clouds, fog, and occasional drizzle, with variable light winds. Not a day that seemed very conducive to finding birds, but that nonetheless turned out to produce a very good count.

We found 133 species, close to our all-time high of 136, with ten additional count week birds. There were 8552 individual birds counted, above our average of about 7500.

Notables were a female Hooded Merganser, which has nested on the same retention pond for the last few years, and her 12 young. We did well with warblers, finding 24 species. We also did well with owls. The last

couple of years have seen a marked increase in the number of Barred Owls – for many years the number of Barred Owls on the count has been five or less, but last year we had 12, and this year we counted 17, along with a Great Horned Owl and our first screech owl since 2009. We also found an unusually large number of Wild Turkey, at 14.

Thirty-six people counted, about average for us, logging 112 party hours, which is below our average of 133.

Elizabeth Link

Southern Pines – Count date April 24th, 127 species, 3952 individuals, 30 participants in 11 teams, 88.17 party-hours.

Compiler: Susan Campbell (susan@ncaves.com)

Participants: Jennifer Archambault, Rex Badgett, Doreen Blanchette, Carol Bowman, Jay Carter, Susan Campbell, Bob Ganis, Tina Ganis, Gabriella Garrison, Mike Green, Alicia Jackson, Charlie Jones, Linda Jones, Lu Ann Kinney, Marjorie Ludwig, Jeff Marcus, Jill McCloy, Mike McCloy, Carolyn McDermott, Bill Mullin, Dan Pieroni, Jon Rouse, Mike Stewart, John Watschke, Leslie Watschke, Michelle Wilcox, Dave Williamson, Nancy Williamson, Darryl Young and Shelley Young.

Exclusives: Mute Swan, Lark Sparrow

Notes: Count day was beautiful, and although we lacked coverage for a few sections of the circle, we did quite well. Lingering winter species were scarce (Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Winter Wren, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Pine Siskin), and late migrants had yet to arrive. Unusual species for the count included Bonaparte's Gull, Caspian Tern, and Semipalmated Plover, all at Woodlake (the largest lake in the count circle).

Susan Campbell

Chapel Hill – Count date May 7th, 128 species, 7421 individuals, 33 field observers and 5 feeder watchers, 139.6 party-hours. Weather: low 51°F, high 74°F; wind 5-15 mph; partly cloudy, no rain

Compiler: Will Cook (cwcook@duke.edu)

Participants: Brian Bockhahn, Norm Budnitz, Chuck Byrd, Jim Capel, Jesse Cavenar, Sue Cavenar, Bob Chase, Carol Chelette, Cathy Cole, Will Cook, Maria deBruyn, Martha DeLong, Richard DeLong, Kent Fiala, Jim George, Mary George, Steve Graves, Perry Haaland, Bobbie Hahn, Jan Hansen, Dave Hart, Gene Kingsley, Mark Kosiewski, Edward Landi, Ken Lundstrom, David Murdock, Judy Murray, Lynn Ogden, Jane Oliver, Peter Perlman, Julia Shields, David Smith, Judy Smith, Pam Timmons, Ginger Travis, Frans Verhagen, Yiou Wang and Bruce Young.

Exclusives: King Rail, Common Gallinule, Rusty Blackbird

Notes: We had a fantastic Chapel Hill spring count this year in terms of total number of species, the second highest in the last 25 years. The weather was very pleasant on Saturday, May 7, 2016, which no doubt helped the count, though the night before was very rainy and several areas were inaccessible because of flooding. The species total of 128 is seven above the 10-year

average of 121, though the total number of birds, 7421, is far below the average of 8829 and the second lowest in the last 20 years. Effort on the count was above average with 139.6 party-hours (average 129.4), but the birds just weren't very active, so we had just 53.2 birds per party hour (average 68.2), the lowest since 1994. Perhaps it wasn't a great count after all.

The bird of the count this year was a Common Gallinule (formerly Common Moorhen) found by Bob Chase at a small pond near Southpoint Mall. This is only the third count record, and the first since 1975. Unfortunately it hasn't been seen since. Also good are a King Rail (Ginger Travis and party), which has been regular lately in the upper reaches of the Cub Creek arm of Jordan Lake. Other goodies included American Coot, Caspian, Common, and Forster's Terns (the first time we've ever had all three!), Eastern Screech-Owl (rare in spring), Bank Swallow, Palm Warbler, Rusty Blackbird, and a lingering Pine Siskin. Common and Caspian Terns are our first since 2003.

We set an amazing number of record highs this year, especially astounding considering that the overall count was below average: 11 Hooded Mergansers this year (including several young), besting the old count of eight, 120 Black Vulture (88 in 2003), 30 Osprey (25 in 2005), 40 Bald Eagle (second highest), 9 Cooper's Hawks (6 in 2012), 153 Northern Rough-winged Swallow (113 in 1997), 11 Magnolia Warbler (7 in 2006). Also in unusually high numbers: Red-tailed Hawk, Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Tree Swallow (highest since 1986), Bank Swallow, Swainson's Thrush, and Black-and-white Warbler.

There were no big misses, but we did set one record low: 13 House Sparrows (previous low 29 in 1973). Quite a few species were remarkably scarce: Canada Goose, Rock Pigeon, Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Martin, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird (lowest since 1975), Northern Mockingbird, European Starling (lowest since 1974), Yellow-throated Warbler (lowest since 1974), Yellow-breasted Chat (lowest since 1971), Scarlet Tanager, Red-winged Blackbird (lowest since 1958!), and Eastern Meadowlark.

Team honors: Brian Bockhahn, covering the Stagecoach Road area, including a long rail-trail to Jordan Lake and the southwest Durham sewage plant, recorded 90 species and 750 individual birds, the highest for both.

Thanks to the 33 field counters and 5 feeder watchers for your help!

Charles W. "Will" Cook

Jordan Lake – Count date May 1st, 119 species, 7302 individuals, 42 participants in 20 parties, 100.58 party-hours. Weather: The day started off cool and overcast, and around 10:00 AM the skies opened and heavy rain ensued, including thunder and lightning. The rain ended around noon, the cloud cover broke up, and the weather moderated. Overall, the temperature ranged from 61°F in the morning to 76°F in the afternoon. Winds were

variable to about 10 mph, and the sky went from overcast to about 50% cloud cover

Compiler: Norm Budnitz (nbudnitz@gmail.com)

Participants: George Altshuller, Barbara Beaman, Elizabeth Bishop, Todd Bishop, Lucas Bobay, Brian Bockhahn, Betsy Bogle, Beverley Brown, Richard Brown, Steve Buczynski, Norm Budnitz, Chris Canfield, Carl Chelette, Carol Chelette, Shi Chen, Barbara Coffman, Patrick Coin, Will Cook, Russell Herman, Loren Hintz, Bo Howes, Julia Huff-Jerome, Gene Kingsley, Terry Korab, Mark Kosiewski, Tom Krakauer, Miao Fang Lin, Kerry MacPherson, Trish MacPherson, Jennifer Maher, Beth Mancuso, Marty McClelland, Frank McKeever, Kyle Mills, Mickey Mills, Judy Murray, Beverly Scalise, Josh Southern, Sterling Southern, Jerry Stanley, Ginger Travis and Margaret Vimmerstedt.

Exclusives: none

Notes: Forty-two observers (a little under our 10-year average of 44) in 20 parties participated. We counted 7302 individual birds (avg. 7995), 119 species (avg. 123) in 101 party hours (avg. 125). These numbers seem to indicate that the rain did, indeed, put a damper on things. It was difficult, if not impossible, to do any birding during the heavy downpour, and some parties called it a day at that point. That said, even under those circumstances, we set a few count records and turned up some unusual species.

Some of the record highs for this year included: Hooded Merganser, 9 (previous high was 5 in 2008); Wild Turkey, 26 (19 in 2009); Double-crested Cormorant, 733 (632 in 2000); Tree Swallow, 104 (90, way back in 1978); and Black-and-white Warbler, 82 (68 in 2015).

Some of the more unusual birds for our count included: Hooded Mergansers (found by Gene Kingsley); Lesser Yellowlegs (Marty McClelland, Ginger Travis); Least Sandpipers (Barbara Coffman, Kyle Mills, Mickey Mills, Beth Mancuso, Jenny Stanley); Forster's Tern (Brian Bockhahn); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (Steve Buczynski, Bo Howes); Warbling Vireo (Brian Bockhahn); Blackburnian Warbler (Josh and Sterling Southern); and a lingering Pine Siskin (Josh and Sterling Southern).

Probably as a result of diminished 'effort,' we missed a number of species that we usually get in the spring including Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks (we had one unidentified *Accipiter* sp.), Solitary Sandpiper, Rock Pigeon, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Veery, Magnolia Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Savannah Sparrow.

Brian Bockhahn found 77 species this spring, with Lucas Bobay hard on his heels with 76, and Steve Buczynski and Bo Howes with 74.

Carol Chelette has been our count coordinator, spring and Christmas for about 15 years. She has done a wonderful job wrangling people and parties, getting areas covered, teaming up new birders with experienced folks, but has decided it is now time to pass the lasso to someone else. She and her husband Carl still want to count birds, and she

assures us she will help a new person learn the ropes (this metaphor is getting tired). So if you are interested, please let us know.

Norm Budnitz

Durham – Count date April 24th, 117 species, 6,074 individuals, 15 participants in 11 parties, 60.00 party-hours. Weather: clear skies and warm temperatures.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Brian Bockhahn, Vern Bothwell, Will Cook, Ed Corey, Norm Budnitz, Deborah Fowler, Bo Howes, Gene Kingsley, Tom Krakauer, Mark Kosiewski, Brian Murphy, Isabel Reddy, Edith Tatum, Scott Winton and Brad Wood.

Exclusives: none

Notes: The Durham Spring Bird Count was held on Sunday, April 24, 2016 under clear skies and warm temperatures. Fifteen observers in 11 parties tallied 117 species and 6074 total birds. Being a new compiler, I don't have the past data, but to compare with other area counts, the Falls Lake eleven-year average is 112 species and the Kerr Lake eleven-year average is 119.

Unusual species for the count included a single Greater Yellowlegs and a single Semipalmated Plover seen in a shorebird flock on properties along the Eno River. And probably a checklist oversight, several parties reported seeing or hearing lingering Pine Siskins.

Other goodies include American Bittern and Common Raven at Brickhouse Road, 3 Bank Swallows at Hickory Hill boat ramp, and two parties found single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at Will Suitt and Quail Roost, very different habitats indeed!

Misses include Acadian Flycatcher (showed up a day or two later, so probably within count week if anyone was out), Swainson's Thrush (which showed up in good numbers after May 1), Cedar Waxwing (which must not be nesting in our area this year), Palm Warbler, and White-crowned Sparrow.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count!

Brian Bockhahn

Falls Lake – Count date April 28th, 130 species, 4746 individuals, 15 participants in 9 parties, 55.67 party-hours. Weather: clearing skies, temperature 62-82°F.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: John Amaroso, Herb Amyx, Pat Amyx, Karen Bearden, Brian Bockhahn, Amy Corbally, Scott Crocker, Lena Gallitano, Deborah Robertson, Bill Swallow, Jeri Smart, Josh Southern, Sterling Southern, Deck Stapleton and Brian Strong.

Exclusives: Lesser Scaup

Notes: The Lucky #13th Falls Lake Spring Bird Count was held on April 28, 2016 under clearing skies and temperatures ranging from 62-82. Heavy rains and a cold front passed through overnight making for a decent fallout! Fifteen observers in eight parties tallied a record-smashing 130 species

(average 114 and previous record was 121!) and 4746 total birds (average 4057).

Most numerous birds were perennial leaders: 573 Ring-billed Gull, 361 Cliff Swallow and 199 Double-crested Cormorants.

First count records: A lone Lesser Scaup was seen and photographed in the center of the lake with a flock of Red-breasted Merganser, a Warbling Vireo was seen and heard well near Shinleaf/Holly Point, a seen and heard Least Flycatcher was a one-minute wonder at Sandling Beach, and a nearby Tennessee Warbler sang for hours and even posed for video! Further down the same shore a Grasshopper Sparrow was photographed hopping on a log in a grassy area along the lake, the bird must have literally dropped out of the sky to that spot!

Second count records: Two parties finding Hooded Merganser, 1 at Sandling and 3 at Rollingview; 3 Forster's Tern were loafing on the swim line at Sandling Beach; Common Nighthawk at Rollingview; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Holly Point/Shinleaf; two separate Blackburnian Warblers in mixed flocks at Sandling Beach.

Third count records: An amazing three parties found Ruddy Duck at Beaverdam, Sandling and Rollingview; Common Raven at Shinleaf/Holly Point; and two parties had Baltimore Oriole at Wake Forest and Shinleaf/Holly Point.

Two species were added during count week, the always count-elusive Sharp-shinned Hawk and Pine Siskin.

Misses: No A-list misses. Northern Bobwhite was missed for the 7th time, Broad-winged Hawk for the 6th time, Solitary Sandpiper and Great Horned Owl for the 3rd time.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count!

Brian Bockhahn

Kerr Lake – Count date April 26th, 127 species, 4143 individuals, 12 participants in 7 parties, 57.30 party-hours. Weather: cloudy skies, light winds, mild temperatures.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Jeff Blalock, Brian Bockhahn, Ann Brice, Adam D'Onofrio, Paul Glass, Fred Lobdell, Carol Mauzey, Grace McCrowell, David Spears, Evan Spears, Deck Stapleton and Clyde Wilson.

Exclusives: Common Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon

Notes: The 13th Kerr Lake Spring Bird Count was held under cloudy skies with light winds. Twelve observers tallied our third highest species count at 126 (average 119). We also tallied our second highest total birds at 4142 (average 3922) led by 475 Black Vultures, 315 Double-crested Cormorants, and 163 Northern Cardinals.

New to the spring checklist included a Pacific Loon that had been lingering around above the dam, and a seemingly injured male Common Merganser that had been at the tailrace below the dam all winter.

Second records included American Woodcock reported by two parties, a pair of Horned Larks photographed on a gravel road near Bullocksville, and two Swainson's Warblers near Satterwhite.

Third records include a Red-throated Loon at Satterwhite, a flyover Glossy Ibis, and 5 Wilson's Snipe at Dick Cross along with other shorebirds.

Fourth records include single Hooded Mergansers reported by two parties and a single Common Tern from Eagle Point.

Misses include nothing off the A-list, but shameless misses include Northern Bobwhite for the fifth time, Cooper's Hawk for the sixth time, Swainson's Thrush for the sixth time, Cedar Waxwing for the fifth time, Song Sparrow for the sixth time, and Baltimore Oriole for the third time.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count!

Brian Bockhahn

Raven Rock State Park – Count date April 30th, 116 species, 4737 individuals, 13 participants, 74.50 party-hours. Weather: temperature 59-66° F; wind east at 0-15 mph.; water open. A.M. overcast; P.M. overcast. Count circle center at junction of NC210 and SR 1434.

Compiler: Erik R. Thomas (erthomas@ncsu.edu)

Participants: Angie DeLozier, David DuMond, Michael Fisk, Paul Hart, Tom Howard, Prudence Mainor, Tim McGreal, Jeff Mielke, Jeanine Reese, Mitch Reese, Mary Stevens, Erik Thomas and Amber Williams

Exclusives: none

Notes: Our total of 116 species was lower than our record-setting counts the past two years. The overcast weather made it harder to find raptors, but the recent rains seemed to have increased our warbler numbers. Key misses included Broad-winged Hawk and Grasshopper Sparrow. Although we had no truly unusual finds, three Swainson's Warblers by Michael Fisk, a Worm-eating Warbler by Paul Hart, and a Yellow Warbler by Tom Howard were species that are usually difficult on this count. Anhingas, observed by David DuMond, and Cliff Swallows, found by Jeff Mielke, have apparently become well established in the circle.

Erik R. Thomas

Coast

Onslow County – Count date April 30th, 165 species, 6265 individuals, 12 participants in 6 teams, 52.50 party-hours. Weather: mostly cloudy, winds ENE at 6-12 knots, high 72°F.

Compiler: Andy Webb (andywebb2008@live.com)

Participants: Dick Barmore, Rich Boyd, Susan Boyd, Jim Craig, John Fussell, Barbara Gould, Gil Grant, Jeannie Kraus, Guy McGrane, Laura O'Donnell, Nikki Reiber and Andy Webb.

Exclusives: Eared Grebe, Clapper Rail, Sora, Black-necked Stilt, American Oystercatcher, Black-bellied Plover, Wilson's Plover, Piping Plover,

Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper, Sanderling, Dunlin, White-rumped Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Willet, Parasitic Jaeger, Laughing Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Least Tern, Royal Tern, Sandwich Tern, Black Skimmer, Northern Gannet, Brown Pelican, Least Bittern, Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Nelson's Sparrow, Saltmarsh Sparrow, Seaside Sparrow, Painted Bunting, Boat-tailed Grackle

Notes: The 21st annual Onslow County Spring Migration count was held Saturday April 30, 2016. There were 12 observers in six parties who tallied 6264 individual birds, a little below our average of 7170, and 165 species tied for our second highest with our average being 154. We logged 52.50 total field hours, 2.50 night hours and one feeder count hour, and we covered 303 miles. There was one species located that was a first for this count.

The one species that was new to the count was a lone Greater Scaup found by Guy McGrane, and seen by Andy Webb, Laura O'Donnell and Barbara Gould. The bird was located at the Jacksonville Water Treatment Plant in one of the spray lagoons. Other good finds included two Parasitic Jaegers located off the Seaview Pier at North Topsail by John Fussell, an American Bittern located at Ashe Island by John Fussell, and seen by Gil Grant and Nikki Reeiber, a White-rumped Sandpiper located by John Fussell and his group, and an Eared Grebe found by Guy McGrane, Andy Webb and Barbara Gould at the water treatment plant.

The most abundant species on the count was Laughing Gull (1558), which is not uncommon. High count species were seven Coopers Hawks, and 17 Seaside Sparrows. Other than that it was an average year count.

Some notable misses were Blue-headed Vireo and Common Moorhen (the 7th year in a row for both species). We had count lows for seven species, but this can be attributed to low coverage on the count this year. We did not have any parties covering the White Oak Township, and only ventured into the Camp Lejeune areas in search of birds missing after the count meeting.

The weather was awesome with temperatures about normal and a high temperature of 72 degrees for the day. The skies were mostly cloudy with no precipitation. The winds were out of the ENE at 6 to 12 knots. All in all it was a great day to be birding with a great team of birders.

Thanks for counting.

Andy Webb

Table 1. 2017 Spring Migration Counts in North Carolina

species	Trans 5/1	Bals 5/21	Hond 5/14	Bunc 5/7	Bl Mts 5/28	Grdftr 5/13	Hang 5/11	Ired 4/24	Meck 4/24	Pilot Mtn 5/3	Fors 5/7	Rock 5/5	Grbr 4/30	SoPl 4/24	ChHl 5/7	Jord 5/1	Durh 4/24	Falls 4/28	Kerr 4/26	RaRo 4/30	Onsl 4/30	total	mtne per party-hour	pled	coast
Canada Goose	114		120	128		7		15	237	27	151	95	347	195	117	106	97	81	75	111	83	2106	1.08	1.73	1.58
Mute Swan														9								9	0.00	0.00	
Wood Duck	1			2				5	36	27	13	1	39	21	29	44	19	9	9	41	14	310	0.01	0.31	0.27
American Black Duck																		1			9	10	0.00	0.00	0.17
Mallard	21		35	40		15		1	154	2	75	5	162	42	40	39	16	13	12	19	13	713	0.35	0.61	0.25
Blue-winged Teal	1								10		1		6								1	21	0.00	0.00	0.06
Redhead											1		1									1	0.00	0.00	
Ring-necked Duck													1								1	2	0.00	0.00	0.02
Greater Scaup	1																	1			1	2	0.00	0.00	
Lesser Scaup																		1			1	1	0.00	0.00	
Bufflehead												1										1	0.00	0.00	
Hooded Merganser			2										13		11	9		4	2			41	0.01	0.00	
Common Merganser																			1		1	1	0.00	0.00	
Red-breasted Merganser	1												3	3				9	6		5	27	0.00	0.00	0.10
Ruddy Duck											1							9			118	128	0.00	0.00	2.25
Northern Bobwhite								1	1		cw			2		2				2	11	20	0.00	0.00	0.21
Ruffed Grouse	2	9		1	3							1						9				16	0.04	0.00	
Wild Turkey		6	16	49	5		2	5		8	9	3	14	13	6	26	9	6	6	5	22	210	0.23	0.12	0.42
Pied-billed Grebe													2	2							1	5	0.00	0.00	0.00
Eared Grebe																					1	1	0.00	0.00	
Rock Pigeon			7	17				17	131	3	30	10	77	8	11		41	20	4	10	44	446	0.07	0.40	0.84
Eurasian Collared Dove			1					2												1	1	5	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mourning Dove	59	12	41	138	1	7	25	60	114	65	103	46	255	111	147	154	74	44	73	210	232	1971	0.82	1.53	4.42
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		1	3	2			1		2	3	5	1	3	1	17	15	3	4	4	25	4	94	0.02	0.09	0.08
Black-billed Cuckoo													cw												
Common Nighthawk			3								1	1		5	1			1			2	14	0.01	0.00	0.04
Chuck wills widow							1		1		3			15	1	15		10	3	12	7	68	0.00	0.00	0.13

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfn	Flang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPl	ChHl	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onsl	total	mtne	pled	per party-hour	coast
Whip-poor-will	5/1	1					3		1	5/3	3	1									4/30	49	0.01	0.00	0.06	
Chimney Swift		27	31	76	32	8	21	16	166	21	233	12	229	35	142	93	46	33	7	104	11	1386	0.69	1.19	0.21	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird		4	4	8	4	3	5	9	15	6	12	5	8	13	31	14	9	9	7	8	1	190	0.13	0.15	0.00	
Clapper Rail															1						4	4			0.06	
King Rail																					3	1	0.00		0.06	
Sora															1							3				
Common Gallinule															1							1	0.00		0.06	
American Coot													1	2	1				2		9	15	0.00		0.17	
Black-necked Stilt																					16	16			0.30	
American Oystercatcher																					2	2			0.04	
Black-bellied Plover																					16	16			0.30	
Wilson's Plover																	1				1	1			0.02	
Semipalmated Plover													CW	4			1				70	75	0.01		1.33	
Piping Plover																					1	1			0.00	
Killdeer			10	4				4	53	1	13	3	41	21	19	21	13	12	16	20	23	214	0.04	0.25	0.44	
Whimbrel																					10	10			0.19	
Ruddy Turnstone																					9	9			0.17	
Red Knot																					1	1			0.02	
Slit Sandpiper																					4	4			0.00	
Sanderling													CW								38	38			0.72	
Dowlin																					80	80			1.52	
Least Sandpiper	1								9	1	62		25	22	27	2			4	39	222	414	0.20	4.23	4.23	
White-rumped Sandpiper																					1	1			0.02	
Semipalmated Sandpiper											2		CW								76	78	0.00		1.45	
Western Sandpiper																					1	1			0.02	
Short-billed Dowitcher													1								108	109	0.00		2.06	
Wilson's Snipe																					1	7	0.00		0.00	
American Woodcock		1							1								1	1	2			6	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Spotted Sandpiper	2		3	5				6	20	7	55	10	46	22	20	14	2	7	8	19	5	251	0.03	0.25	0.10	

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfr	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPi	Chill	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onst	total	mtne	pled	count
	5/1	5/21	6/14	6/7	5/28	6/13	6/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	6/7	6/6	4/30	4/24	6/7	6/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30	176	0.01	0.18	0.04
Solitary Sandpiper	2			2						7	57	4	27	9	22		5		7	17	2	38	0.03	0.03	0.27
Greater Yellowlegs											4		cw	17			1		2		36	36			0.69
Willet											11		14	11		2		3		1	79	121	0.00	0.00	1.50
Lesser Yellowlegs																					2	2			0.04
Parasitic Jaeger																					7	12	0.01	0.01	0.13
Honapouli's Gull													cw	1		3		1			1558	1558			29.68
Laughing Gull										1			32	11	6	180	117	573	56		199	1176	0.00	1.02	3.79
Ring-billed Gull	1																	2	1		63	66	0.00	0.00	1.20
Herring Gull																				2	2	2			0.04
Lesser Black-backed Gull																				3	3	3			0.06
Great Black-backed Gull																				20	20	20			0.38
Least Tern													1	2	1		22	1	6		34	34	0.04	0.04	
Caspian Tern									1						1				1		167	169	0.00	0.00	3.18
Common Tern													cw		3	1		3		106	113	0.00	0.00	2.02	
Forster's Tern																				42	42	42			0.80
Royal Tern																				23	23	23			0.44
Sandwich Tern																				2	2	2			0.04
Black Skimmer																				181	181	181			3.43
tern sp																			1		1	1	0.00	0.00	
Red-throated Loon																			1		1	1	0.00	0.00	
Pacific Loon																			14		17	48	0.00	0.00	0.32
Common Loon									3				1			5		8			59	59			1.12
Northern Gannet																					102	2230	0.06	3.26	1.94
Double-Crested Cormorant	19		1					1	71		6		404	8	162	733	1194	199	315	15	137	137			2.61
Aukinga																				13	2	15	0.00	0.00	0.04
Brown Pelican																					1	2	0.00	0.00	
American Bittern																					1	2	0.00	0.00	
Least Bittern																					2	2			0.04

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfrr	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPi	ChHI	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onsl	total	mtne	pled	coast	
																									per party-hour	
Great Blue Heron	5/1	5/21	5/14	5/7	5/28	5/13	5/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	5/7	5/5	4/30	4/24	5/7	5/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30	7	873	0.17	0.85	0.13
Great Egret	50		4	2				3	2	1	20	3			117	126	242	62	43	18	12	23	0.00	0.23		
Snowy Egret																	8				2	2		0.04		
Little Blue Heron																					4	4	0.00	0.08		
Tricolored Heron																					3	3		0.06		
Cattle Egret																					1	2	0.00	0.00		
Green Heron			2	2					13	7	5		10	1	6	2	5	5	2		11	79	0.01	0.07	0.21	
Black-crowned Nt Heron									7				3		8						2	2		0.04		
Yellow-crowned Nt Heron																						18		0.00		
White Ibis																					25	25		0.48		
Glossy Ibis																			1		10	11	0.00	0.19		
Black Vulture	5		22				1	28	15	10	16	10	20	4	120	54	65	21	475	7	4	877	0.08	0.89	0.08	
Turkey Vulture	35	4	19		7		15	42	48	35	33	11	41	59	137	59	68	46	121	37	84	966	0.42	0.77	1.60	
Osprey	1						1	3	3	2	1	1	10	1	30	52	20	23	21	2	11	182	0.01	0.18	0.21	
Mississippi Kite																										
Bald Eagle	1	1					1		1	2			2	2	40	29	17	14	20	1	1	132	0.01	0.00	0.02	
Northern Harrier				1																		1	0.00			
Sharp-shinned Hawk								1			1			2			1		1	1		7		0.00		
Cooper's Hawk	4				1		1	1	10	1	7	1	5	4	9		1	1			7	55	0.02	0.00	0.13	
accipiter sp.									1						1	1						5	0.01	0.00		
Red-shouldered Hawk	4	2	8				3	7	37	6	21	2	22	18	36	8	23	13	7	8	9	239	0.06	0.22	0.17	
Broad-winged Hawk	3	5	4	5	12	2		1	3	3	1			1	1							41	0.09	0.00		
Red-tailed Hawk	2	3	6	8			2	5	23	7	17	1	12	9	36	8	21	5	7	5	3	180	0.06	0.16	0.06	
Eastern Screech Owl										1	1		1		1			4	2	1	1	12		0.00	0.00	
Great-horned Owl	1						1		5	1	1	1	1	3	2		1		1	1	2	21	0.01	0.00	0.04	
Barred Owl				1	1		1	2	14	2	10		17	2	13	1	10	7	5	4	1	91	0.01	0.00	0.00	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	2	3			2																7	0.02				
Belted Kingfisher	3		5	3	2	1			5	2	9	2	8	6	7	2	3	6	3	1		68	0.04	0.06		

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfr	Hang	Ired	Heck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Gibr	SoPl	Chili	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onsl	total	mtne	pled	coast
	5/1	5/21	5/14	5/7	5/28	5/13	5/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	5/7	5/5	4/30	4/24	5/7	5/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30	4/30		per party-hour	
Red-headed Woodpecker									3	1												133	0.13	0.15	
Red bellied Woodpecker	2/	6	20	34			17	21	93	10	77	14	7	22	13	25	16	13	16	9	8	940	0.30	0.86	0.30
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4	4	2			1	1						1		134	80	65	35	33	81	16	15	0.03	0.00	
Downy Woodpecker	1/	3	17	13	2	1	17	11	74	4	46	6	57	14	62	32	21	22	12	19	5	455	0.20	0.40	0.10
Hairy Woodpecker	1	10	5	6	14	1			6	3	3	2	6	4	9	7	8	7	1	7	2	102	0.11	0.07	
Rd cockaded Woodpecker														4							6		0.00	0.04	
Northern (Y-s) Flicker	2	3	1	17		3	1	1	7	2	12	2	22	11	12	15	4	8	2	1	4	130	0.08	0.00	0.08
Pileated Woodpecker	19	9	14	22	4		12	3	7	3	8	2	7	25	19	27	13	13	18	16	9	250	0.23	0.17	0.17
American Kestrel				1				1	2				1	2								7	0.01	0.00	
Morlin												1									1		0.00		
Peregrine Falcon	1	1																			2	0.01			
Eastern Wood Pewee	5	13	9	2	8		11			7	18	1	9	9	49	28	8	8	2	19	11	217	0.14	0.17	0.21
Acadian Flycatcher	32		21	10	8		21		2	2	7	1	3	2	56	19		5	2	20	4	215	0.27	0.12	0.08
Alder Flycatcher		23			3																	26	0.08		
Willow Flycatcher	1		6																		7	0.02			
Least Flycatcher	1	28			3																33	0.09	0.00		
Laslem Phoebe	44	6	19	46	8	1	18	10	58	12	33	12	23	8	41	36	11	11	9	18	1	425	0.41	0.30	0.00
Great Crested Flycatcher	1		2	2	1		2	3	41	4	27	3	49	81	73	50	14	61	35	79	85	613	0.02	0.55	1.62
Eastern Kingbird	3			18			3	14	26	12	40	3	25	93	28	91	10	12	49	58	15	500	0.07	0.48	0.29
Loggerhead Shrike									1					7				1		5		14		0.00	
White-eyed Vireo	16		8	6				11	20	4	26	1	13	55	42	55	101	51	79	41	18	547	0.09	0.52	0.34
Yellow-throated Vireo			1	1			3	1	1	5		4	68	12	7	12	14	17	16	9	3	106	0.01	0.00	0.06
Blue-headed Vireo		198	25	83	148	19		2	4	4	1	4	3	5	5	4	9	8	4	2		022	1.65	0.06	
Warbling Vireo											2					1		1				4		0.00	
Red-eyed Vireo	90	53	104	124	55	9	58	29	96	73	117	21	103	32	149	133	130	124	108	73	5	1686	1.44	1.25	0.10
Blue Jay	62	25	63	175	21	5	22	64	74	31	96	18	152	105	93	75	115	34	103	79	20	1432	1.09	1.09	0.38
American Crow	175	51	135	201	14	27	30	65	81	33	131	56	285	252	243	274	131	92	128	167	70	2741	1.85	2.14	1.33
Fish Crow							2	3	56		47	3	19	47	35	36	27	49	45	9	13	391	0.01	0.39	0.25

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfn	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPl	Chill	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onsl	total	mtne	pled	coast
Common Raven	5/1	7																				63	0.15	0.00	
Crow sp.																						23		0.00	
Horned Lark														5					2	0	1	16		0.02	0.00
Purple Martin														59	29	22	16	3	3	141	97	1124	0.14	1.03	1.85
Tree Swallow	180						2	3	11	4	18	13	108	8	125	104	16	13	8	11	15	770	0.91	0.46	0.29
N. Rough-winged Swallow	76							7	65	10	58	8	90	26	153	79	33	34	61	56	23	834	0.38	0.71	0.44
Bank Swallow											2		12		5	3	3	1			12	38		0.00	0.23
Cliff Swallow									38	71	59		19		17	184	36	361	26	8	1	870	0.15	0.86	0.02
Rain Swallow	212						2	103	33	20	143	12	84	51	93	109	63	30	32	101	142	1386	1.08	0.92	2.70
swallow sp.									1													1		0.00	
Carolina Chickadee	108							30	187	37	114	18	189	66	215	138	148	86	55	55	17	1685	1.02	1.38	0.32
Black-capped Chickadee	1																					10	0.03		
chickadee sp.																						22	0.06		
Tufted Titmouse	109							40	99	46	138	30	158	103	318	243	201	130	122	88	16	2106	1.09	1.80	0.30
Red-breasted Nuthatch	9																					156	0.45		
White-breasted Nuthatch	9						14	7	11	4	27	2	38	35	21	13	4	24	8	5	1	248	0.14	0.21	0.02
Brown-headed Nuthatch								6	57	7	27	2	49	76	64	68	40	70	19	13	18	523	0.02	0.52	0.34
Brown Creeper	3																					69	0.20		
House Wren	26						1	5	31	2	27		20	2	40		4	7	1			194	0.16	0.15	
Winter Wren	1													2								105	0.30	0.00	
Marsh Wren									1		1										3	5	0.00	0.06	
Carolina Wren	90						24	42	187	28	139	15	178	81	235	149	127	69	89	104	63	1882	1.10	1.51	1.20
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher	32						26	28	159	35	91	20	92	101	192	173	351	154	117	115	38	1789	0.36	1.71	0.72
Golden-crowned Kinglet	16																					373	1.09		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3							1	32	10	3		7	5		2	3	3	4	1		75	0.01	0.00	
Eastern Bluebird	49						32	57	64	37	88	41	135	87	111	130	61	59	49	124	57	1317	0.63	1.09	1.09
Veery	15								7	6	10	1	7		6		1	1	1			293	0.74	0.04	
Gray checked Thrush											2		1									3		0.00	

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfn	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPl	ChHi	Jord	Durh	Falls	Keri	RaRo	Onsl	total	mths	pled	coast
	5/1	5/21	5/14	5/7	5/28	5/13	5/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	5/7	5/5	4/30	4/24	5/7	5/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30	74	0.03	0.07	
Swarson's Thrush	2	1			1		6		1	13	19	2	7		19	2		1				100	0.28	0.00	0.00
Hermit Thrush	1	22		5	68	1					1						1				4	430	0.39	0.31	0.08
Wood Thrush	29	16	20	42	4	2	21	12	19	19	38	20	42	5	42	37	8	27	9	14	20	2869	2.33	2.15	0.38
American Robin	176	114	65	281	83	44	35	107	539	86	234	76	476	62	184	50	35	73	11	118	11	850	0.70	0.63	0.21
Gray Catbird	58	82	22	34	23	15	5	5	63	18	96	4	140	32	78	58	9	49	6	42	11	1203	0.37	1.04	1.64
Brown Thrasher	21	14	25	30	3	3	9	19	82	8	22	4	50	39	63	24	9	14	14	45	12	2510	0.31	0.41	0.23
Northern Mockingbird	16		38	68			5	52	140	18	86	13	114	138	103	79	38	30	50	129	86	1203	0.37	1.04	1.64
European Starling	61	4	37	180		35	15	166	287	107	202	103	514	59	106	52	40	43	50	261	160	2570	0.97	2.10	3.05
Cedar Waxwing	68	84	97	156	32	17	5		307	85	208		103	9	89	132		8		58	5	1463	1.34	1.05	0.10
House Sparrow	5		3	14				2	46	2	7	5	27	6	13	26	3	29	10	21	26	245	0.06	0.21	0.50
American Pipit									8												8		0.00		
House Finch	18	2	26	67		3	6	12	132	13	81	16	170	47	113	23	35	20	3	50	32	869	0.36	0.75	0.61
Red Crossbill		2			10																12		0.03		
Pine Siskin	17	2	2	5	45	28		1	2					15	1	1	3				122	0.29	0.00		
American Goldfinch	92	14	63	141	6	7	23	185	189	32	149	15	232	60	214	203	142	146	64	45	3	2025	1.01	1.76	0.06
Ovenbird	82	54	58	87	67	4	22		33	11	12	17	37	15	121	118	68	98	41	54	11	1010	1.09	0.66	0.21
Worm-eating Warbler	16		25	9	5		9	1	3		CW	1	1		2	2	3		3	1	5	83	0.19	0.00	0.10
Louisiana Waterthrush	18		11	1	2		7		2	16	3	9	3		18	10	14	3	3	15		135	0.11	0.10	
Northern Waterthrush	7		2	1			1		8	3	4		4		12	8	9	3	2	5		69	0.03	0.00	
Blue-winged Warbler									6			1	1				2		1			11		0.00	
Black & White Warbler	71	24	30	42	32	11	12		29	11	10	4	21	26	35	82	26	40	17	43	3	569	0.65	0.36	0.06
Prothonotary Warbler									10	3	2		4	8	23	20	43	17	26	36	13	205		0.20	0.25
Swarson's Warbler	10		5				1							3					2	3	3	27	0.05	0.00	0.06
Tennessee Warbler			1						2		1							1				6	0.00	0.00	
Connecticut Warbler			1							1											1	1	0.00		
Orange-crowned Warbler																					1	1	0.00		
Nashville Warbler			1								CW											1	0.00		
Kentucky Warbler				3						2				7						6	3	51	0.01	0.05	0.06

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfr	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPi	ChHI	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	BaRo	Onsl	total	mtne	pled	const
	5/1	5/21	5/14	5/7	5/28	5/13	5/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	5/7	5/5	4/30	4/24	5/7	5/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30				
Common Yellowthroat	41	57	17	5	5	5	3	19	33	20	49	7	79	36	125	92	102	53	50	61	12	871	0.39	0.76	0.23
Hooded Warbler	84	19	55	88	9	6	14		15	6	3	2	19	25	31	38	24	25	22	35	15	535	0.80	0.26	0.29
American Redstart	12	8	18	32	1		9	3	6	7	37	2	29	3	44	26	2	8	1	21		209	0.23	0.20	
Cape May Warbler	12	1	2					8	8	25	30	3	4									93	0.04	0.00	
Cerulean Warbler				2								1	cw								3	0.01	0.00		
Northern Parula	63	20	26	16	8		18	9	53	40	47	15	86	32	81	85	95	65	26	46	7	840	0.44	0.71	0.13
Magnolia Warbler	5			1		1	3			9	4	1	2		11			2				39	0.03	0.00	
Bay-breasted Warbler	3	1																			4	0.01			
Blackburnian Warbler	28	23	3	45	83	5		1		1	2		1			1		2				195	0.55	0.00	
Yellow Warbler	4		4	7			2		11	2	13		12	5	7	10	6	8	4	1	1	95	0.05	0.00	0.00
Chestnut-sided Warbler	64	275	5	24	34	7			1	1	18		3		4							436	1.19	0.00	
Blackpoll Warbler	6		2	4		2	1		2	4	14		3		3	4						45	0.04	0.00	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	79	105	16	50	111	30	6	2	51	20	52	8	72	7	97	48	11	43	10	7		825	1.16	0.45	
Palm Warbler	1			3				11	18		1	1		4	2	3		2	1		47	0.01	0.05		
Pine Warbler	4		2				17	7	49	14	21	3	38	63	113	164	70	90	60	41	28	784	0.07	0.77	0.53
Yellow-rumped Warbler	7				2		2	11	295	78	46	12	91	57	27	128	153	118	83	6	18	1142	0.06	1.16	0.34
Yellow-throated Warbler	17		3	1			7	1	1	9	3		21	25	11	59	61	65	34	34	13	344	0.08	0.32	0.25
Prairie Warbler							8	9	6	2	cw			32	18	44	60	19	38	24	32	313	0.02	0.29	0.61
Black-throated Green Warbler	73	168	58	49	181	5	6		3	12	15		7			1	2	5	1			586	1.57	0.00	
Canada Warbler	35	122	3	31	134	16					cw	1	1								343	0.99	0.00		
Yellow-breasted Chat	2						3	1	3	5	4	1	14	1	13	36	2	4	14	29	10	142	0.01	0.00	0.19
Lasten Towhee	202	278	139	194	68	25	7	26	129	7	102	5	145	103	153	127	77	45	43	35	29	1939	2.66	1.04	0.55
Bachman's Sparrow												11		2							4	17		0.00	0.08
Chipping Sparrow	33	3	27	47	2	9	27	29	107	27	28		76	134	148	163	55	161	156	120	4	1356	0.43	1.26	0.08
Field Sparrow	9	13	16	17			2	33	55	12	9		19	2	12	21	17	14	13	10		274	0.17	0.23	
Lark Sparrow														3							3			0.00	
Savannah Sparrow			3					5	4		7		6	2	3		10		4	5	2	51	0.01	0.00	0.04
Grasshopper Sparrow			1					28	2	5	16	1	14	1			5	1	14			88	0.00	0.00	

species	Trans	Bals	Hend	Bunc	Bl Mts	Grdfr	Hang	Ired	Meck	Pilot Mtn	Fors	Rock	Grbr	SoPi	ChHi	Jord	Durh	Falls	Kerr	RaRo	Onsl	total
total species	5/1	5/21	5/14	5/7	5/28	5/13	5/11	4/24	4/24	5/3	5/7	5/5	4/30	4/24	5/7	5/1	4/24	4/28	4/26	4/30	4/30	242
total individuals	344167	343038	342831	344891	342443	340628	340907	342232	346570	341847	345325	341104	348472	343824	347397	347230	345946	344650	344031	344657	346185	7228375
# participants	22	25	17	22	15	3	13	10	28	6	52	5	36	30	33	42	15	15	15	13	12	429
cw. count week											8		10									
total party hours	84.00	63.50	48.95	65.50	45.60	15.50	20.00	25.00	86.15	26.10	100.50	27.98	112.50	88.17	139.60	100.58	60.00	55.67	57.30	74.55	52.50	1349.65
hours on foot	36.00	49.05	28.00	26.35	35.60		16.00	17.50	73.90	24.10	87.75	22.88	86.00	46.17	125.75	82.65	54.25	49.50	45.75	36.25	31.00	974.45
hours by car	48.00	14.45	20.95	39.15	10.00		4.00	7.50	12.25	2.00	5.75	5.10	26.50	39.00	6.85	13.43	5.75	6.17	11.55	31.30	21.50	331.20
hours by bicycle/scooter																						0.00
hours by canoe/kayak/boat																						0.00
hours ATV																						0.00
total party miles	203.00	98.40	121.56	324.45	59.15	52.20	14.00	97.00	297.86	27.35	99.65	125.10	375.00	314.10	154.00	137.25	94.00	114.80	150.25	414.75	303.00	3576.87
miles on foot	24.00	42.90	20.36	21.95	40.65	8.20	10.00	14.00	69.36	12.35	48.15	5.10	51.50	21.35	81.00	70.15	53.50	40.00	28.10	27.85	7.00	697.47
miles by car	179.00	55.50	101.20	302.50	18.50	44.00	4.00	83.00	228.50	15.00	50.50	120.00	323.50	292.50	66.00	63.10	40.50	74.80	122.15	381.50	296.00	2861.75
miles by bicycle/scooter																						0.00
miles canoe/kayak/boat																						0.00
miles by ATV																						0.00
hours night		1.50		0.50			3.00		4.30	2.75	5.50	0.50		4.25	4.00	3.75	0.50	2.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	41.55
miles night	1.00						2.00		2.85	6.50	1.00	1.00			8.45	4.00	1.00	1.50	3.10	10.25	7.00	49.65
feeder hours	6.00										1.50			6.50	21.00				1.00		1.00	37.00

Column Key for Table 1:

Trans	Transylvania County	Fors	Forsyth County
Bals	Balsam Mountains	Rock	Rockingham
Hend	Henderson County	Grbr	Greensboro
Bunc	Buncombe County	SoPi	Southern Pines
Bl Mts	Black Mountains	ChHi	Chapel Hill
Grdfr	Grandfather Mountain	Jord	Jordan Lake
Hang	Hanging Rock	Durh	Durham
Ired	Iredell County	Falls	Falls Lake
Meck	Mecklenburg County	Kerr	Kerr Lake
Pilot Mtn	Pilot Mountain	RoRa	Roanoke Rapids
		Onsl	Onslow County

mtns	mountains
pied	piedmont
coast	coast



BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2017, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **Ln** – Lane, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Ross's Goose: This small goose, once very rare in the Carolinas, began arriving in mid-November, with five at the Mills River WTP, Henderson Co, NC, 9 Nov (Bob Butler); four around the pond where US-64 crosses over Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 22 Nov (Ed Corey); up to two at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 22 Nov through 3 Dec (George McHenry, m. obs.); one at the Maggie Valley Golf Course, Haywood Co, NC, 26 Nov (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz, m. obs.); a high count of eight around the pond along Beasley Rd, 26 Nov (Jeff Lewis); and four at a pond along Shopton Rd in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 30 Nov through 3 Dec (Kevin Metcalf, m. obs.).

Greater White-fronted Goose: 19 photographed in the marsh on the south side of Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 19 Nov (Ben Graham) was a fantastic count for that area. Other sightings included six at Bookhart Farm, Orangeburg Co, SC, 19 Nov (Donna & Harold Donnelly); up to three at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 22-26 Nov (George McHenry, Matt Johnson, m. obs.); and up to three around the pond where US-64 crosses over Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 22 Nov into winter (Ed Corey, Jeff Lewis, m. obs.).

Cackling Goose: One seen and photographed with Canada Geese on Mulligan's Pond in Caldwell Co, NC, 1-11 Nov (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.) was the only one reported this fall.

Eurasian Wigeon: Wings Over Water Festival participants found drakes at three sites in coastal NC—on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 20 Oct (Jeff Lemons, et al.) into winter; on the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, 20-21 Oct (m. obs.); and in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, where up to three were seen 21 Oct (Susan Campbell, et al.).

King Eider: A hen seen and photographed around the south end of the Bonner Bridge at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 16-18 Nov (Catherine Bailey, Sharon Kearns, m. obs.) and briefly on nearby North Pond, 18 Nov (Jeff Beane, Stephanie Horton) was the first in North Carolina in eight years.

Common Eider: Sightings included a hen in flight off Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 5 Nov (Jeff Lewis, et al.); three around the Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, 17 Nov (Benjamin Murphy, et al.); a first-year drake around the pier at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 19 Nov into Dec (William Kidwell, m. obs.); and an adult drake around the Folly Beach Fishing Pier, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Nov into Dec (Simon Harvey, m. obs.).

Surf Scoter: Inland sightings were made of individuals on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 30 Oct (Mark Kosiewski, Matt Spangler); on a pond in Orangeburg Co, SC, 10 Nov (Julie Mobley); on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 11 Nov (Matt Wangerin); and on Lake Gaston, Warren Co, NC, 26 Nov (George Neese, Paul Scharf).

Long-tailed Duck: Two at the Mills River WTP, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Nov (Ben & Carol Ringer, George Ivy, Wayne Forsythe) were

unusual for the mountain region. Five on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 26 Nov (Henry Link, m. obs.) was a good count for a site in the Piedmont.

Common Merganser: Eight on the South Toe River near Celo, Yancey Co, NC, 4 Aug (*fide* Clifton Avery) probably summered in that area, as six were seen that same site 13 May (Travis Knowles, et al.).

Red-necked Grebe: One was seen and photographed on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 17 Nov into December (Henry Link, m. obs.).

White-winged Dove: Individuals were photographed around the Old Coast Guard Station at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 20 Sep (Jeff Lewis, et al.) and at a feeder in Davis, Carteret Co, NC, 27-29 Sep (Mark Piner, *fide* John Fussell).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One photographed along the south dike of North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 6 Nov (Karen Lebing) was late to depart.

Rufous Hummingbird: An adult female banded at feeder in Woodford, Ashe Co, NC, 4 Nov (Dwayne Martin, et al.) was likely the same *Selasphorus* hummingbird that visited that feeder last fall.

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird: *Selasphorus* hummingbirds not identified to species were photographed at feeders in Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 18 Oct into winter (Michael Plauché, m. obs.); in Boone, Watauga Co, NC, 6 Nov (Martha Cutler); in Carteret Co, NC, 2-20 Nov (Geneva Pigott); and in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, 16-17 Nov (Carol Tuskey).

Calliope Hummingbird: An immature male visited a feeder in Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 27 Nov into December (Taylor Piephoff, m. obs.).

Broad-billed Hummingbird: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report of a female Broad-billed Hummingbird that visited a feeder in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 30 Oct (Jeff Lewis, Joan Kutulas) into December (m. obs.). If accepted, this report will provide the fourth official record of the species in NC.

Black Rail: One was heard in the North River Marsh, Carteret Co, NC, 8 Sep (John Fussell). One was seen at the Bodie Island Lighthouse Pond, Dare Co, NC, 16 Oct (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock) and heard calling 21 Oct (Jeff Lewis).

Clapper Rail: A moribund individual found along Reedy Creek Rd in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 18 Sep (Jeff Beane) was unusual for a site away from the coast.

King Rail: One heard in a freshwater cattail marsh on the west end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Nov (John Fussell, Donna Goodwin) was very unusual for Cape Lookout NS, as suitable habitat for that species is very limited there.

Sora: Individuals along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Simon Thompson) and at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 4 Oct (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz) were somewhat unusual for the mountain region.

Purple Gallinule: Several pairs probably bred in an impoundment along the Great Pee Dee River in Plantersville, Georgetown Co, SC, this

year, as 11, including juveniles, were seen there 7 Aug (Chris Hill, John Hutchens). An immature bird at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 29 Nov (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was late.

Common Gallinule: One heard in a freshwater cattail marsh on the west end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Nov (John Fussell, Donna Goodwin) was very unusual for Cape Lookout NS, because of the lack of suitable habitat.

Sandhill Crane: Two were seen in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, Washington Co, NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis) into December (m. obs.).

American Avocet: Individuals seen and photographed at Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 6 Aug (Elizabeth & Henry Link, m. obs.) and at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12-13 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, m. obs.) were great finds for those inland sites. The latter sighting was also a first for Henderson County.

Black-bellied Plover: 11 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Butler, m. obs.) was a great count for the mountain region.

American Golden-Plover: Sod farms hosting golden-plovers this fall were Super Sod in Henderson Co, NC, 20 Aug through 13 Sep, with a high count of 20 on 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Butler); Vandemark Farms in Nash Co, NC, 27 Aug through 2 Sep, with a high count of four on 2 Sep (Ricky Davis); Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 3-4 Sep, with a high count of two on 3 Sep (Julie Mobley, et al.); and Modern Turf in Sumter Co, SC, 24-28 Sep (m. obs.) with a high count of four on 28 Sep (Steve Patterson). Counts at other sites included two on the mudflats at the upper end of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 30 Sep through 3 Nov (Mark Kosiewski, m. obs.); up to three at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Sep through 6 Nov (m. obs.); and seven on the spit at Ft Fisher, border of Brunswick Co and New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Oct (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper).



*American Golden-Plovers, 29 Oct 2017,
Brunswick Co, NC, Photo by Sam Cooper*

Snowy Plover: One continued from late July around Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 4 Aug (Derb Carter) through 20 Aug (Ricky Davis).

Wilson's Plover: One on the west end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Nov (John Fussell, Donna Goodwin) was late, probably wintering in the area.

Semipalmated Plover: 9000 on the spit at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 25 Aug (David Weesner) was a remarkable total, 46 on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Sep (Ricky Davis) and 17 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Butler) were notable counts for those sites away from the coast.

Piping Plover: Rare inland, individual Piping Plovers on the mudflats in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 2-5 Aug (Nate Swick, Andrew Thornton, m. obs.) and at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12-15 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, m. obs.) were great finds.

Upland Sandpiper: This grasspiper was found in the grassy areas of two airports in coastal NC this fall—at the Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, from late July through 14 Aug (Jurek Smykla), with a high count of four on 6 Aug (Jacob Farmer, et al.) and at the airport in Beaufort, Carteret Co, 16 Aug through 1 Sep (Martin Wall, m. obs.), with a high count of four on 24 Aug (Wall). One photographed at the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 22 Aug (Michael Gosselin, Audrey Whitlock, et al.) was unusual for that site. The only site in SC that hosted this species this fall was the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, where one was seen 6 Aug (Andy Harrison) through 26 Aug (Caroline Eastman).

Long-billed Curlew: Two were seen in Carteret Co, NC, this fall—one at the Rachel Carson Reserve, 13 Oct through 7 Nov (Jeannie Kraus, John Fussell, m. obs.) and one on the east end of Shackleford Banks, 20-22 Oct (Sheryl McNair, m. obs.). One photographed at Cape Lookout, 16 Nov (Benjamin & Carrie Murphy) was probably the same individual seen on nearby Shackleford Banks in October. In SC, two were seen at Cape Romain NWR, a traditional wintering site for the species, Charleston Co, 26 Oct (John Cox, et al), 19 Nov (Roger Smith), and 26 Nov (Ed Blich, et al.).

Bar-tailed Godwit: An adult seen on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 24 Sep through 8 Oct (John Fussell, et al.) was probably the same individual seen at that site last fall.

Hudsonian Godwit: A total of 57, in two separate flocks of 38 and 19 birds, flying south over the ocean off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 18 Aug (John O'Brien, Michael O'Brien) was an amazing total and a new record high count for the Carolinas. The passage of Hurricane Irma resulted in two important sightings—two at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Sep (Doug Johnston, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson, m. obs.), only the second record for the mountain region, and 11 at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 12 Sep (Stacy Barbour, Lucas Bobay, m. obs.), a new record high count for a site away from the coast. Individuals

photographed at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 9 Aug (Roger Smith) and on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 21 Aug (Martin Wall) were also good finds.



Hudsonian Godwits, 12 Sep 2017, Wake Co, NC, Photo by Stacy Barbour

Ruddy Turnstone: Individuals photographed at the Simpson Research Station, Anderson Co, SC, 6 Sep (George McHenry, et al.) and on mudflats at Lake Norman in Lincoln Co, NC, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.) were good finds for those inland sites.

Ruff: Individuals were seen at the Beaufort Club golf course, Carteret Co, NC, 17-26 Sep (Clyde Atkins, m. obs.) and at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Sep (Pam Ford, et al.).

Stilt Sandpiper: 26 on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Sep (Ricky Davis) was a good count for a site away from the coast.

Sanderling: Sanderlings were found at about a dozen inland sites this fall, primarily from late August to early September, with five at the Simpson Research Station in Anderson Co, SC, 6 Sep (Linda Montgomery, et al.) and four along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 6 Sep (Wayne Forsythe) being the two highest inland counts.

Dunlin: 104 on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Nov (Stacy Barbour) was an impressive count for

the Piedmont. Nine along Butler Bridge Rd in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was a notable count for the mountain region.

Baird's Sandpiper: Nine at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 2 Sep (Simon Thompson) was an amazing count for any site in the Carolinas. Two were seen on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 1 Sep (Mark Kosiewski, Matt Spangler). Individuals were seen at Vandemark Farms in Nash Co, NC, 2 Sep (Ricky Davis); at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 7-12 Sep (Kathy Woolsey, m. obs.); on the lawn in front of the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, 18-26 Sep (Audrey Whitlock, Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 30 Sep (m. obs.); and at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Sep (m. obs.).

White-rumped Sandpiper: A few of the higher counts were ten at the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 24-27 Aug (m. obs.); five in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Sep (Ricky Davis); five along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12-13 Sep (Simon Thompson, m. obs.); and four at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Oct (Matthew Janson, Jack Rogers). One along Butler Bridge Rd in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was late to depart.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: High counts at sod farms were two at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 27 Aug (Pam Ford, et al.) through 14 Sep (m. obs.); nine at Super Sod in Henderson Co, NC, 1 Sep (Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson); three at Vandemark Farms in Nash Co, NC, 2 Sep (Ricky Davis); four at the farm along Laurel Rd in Carteret Co, NC, 6 Sep (Martin Wall); and eight at American Turf in Washington Co, NC, 10 Sep (Davis).

Pectoral Sandpiper: 220 at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 12 Aug (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was the highest count made this fall. One seen and photographed along the Boone Greenway, Watauga Co, NC, 12-13 Sep (Guy McGrane, m. obs.) was unusual for the northern mountain region. One in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 19 Nov (Matt Spangler) was somewhat late.

Western Sandpiper: Eight at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep (Doug Johnston, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson) was a good count for the mountain region.

Short-billed Dowitcher: A few of the higher counts made at inland sites were 18 along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Butler); 13 at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 3 Sep (Ricky Davis); and 26 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 13 Sep (Jeffrey Greco).

Solitary Sandpiper: One photographed at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 29 Oct (Martin Wall, et al.) was late to depart.

Lesser Yellowlegs: 108 on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 9 Sep (Jelmer Poelstra) was a notable count for the Piedmont.

Willet: Rare inland sightings were made of two at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 11 Aug (Chris Feeney) and two at the Simpson Research Station, Anderson Co, SC, 6 Sep (George McHenry, Linda Montgomery, et al.).

Wilson's Phalarope: Individuals were seen on the flooded lawn at Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, 9 Aug (Audrey Whitlock); on the mudflats on the west end of Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 15-20 Aug (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly, m. obs.); at the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 3 Sep (Whitlock, m. obs.); at McAlpine WTP (restricted access), Mecklenburg Co, NC, 6 Sep (Jeff Lemons, m. obs.); and again at Lake Wheeler, 12 Sep (Stacy & Natalie Barbour).



Wilson's Phalarope, 15 Aug 2017, Wake Co, NC

Photo by Stacy Barbour

Red-necked Phalarope: The passage of Hurricane Irma resulted in multiple sightings—two off the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 Sep (Juliana Smith, Jake Zadik); 16 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Jeffrey Greco, m. obs.); five at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Jamie Adams); three in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 12 Sep (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.); one along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.); one at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 12 Sep (David Disher, et al.); one at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 12 Sep (John Cox); one along Haywood Rd in Henderson Co, NC, 13 Sep (Thompson); and two along Hooper Ln, 13 Sep (Michael Robertson, m. obs.).

South Polar Skua: One was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 25 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Pomarine Jaeger: Rarely seen from shore, a Pomarine Jaeger was seen off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 Oct (Andrew Thornton, et al.) and two were seen off Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 21 Oct (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen).

Parasitic Jaeger: Pending review by the SC BRC was the report of a dark-morph individual seen near the dam on J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir in McCormick Co, SC, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep (Matt Malin, Mark Vukovich). One over the Rachel Carson Reserve and adjacent Taylor Creek, Carteret Co, NC, following the passage of Hurricane Nate, 9 Oct (Martin Wall, et al.) was unusual for a site away from the ocean. 12 off Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 21 Oct (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen) and six off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 3 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.) were good counts.

Long-tailed Jaeger: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report of an injured individual found on the beach on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, during the passage of Hurricane Nate, 8 Oct (Emily Davis, fide Matthew Campbell).

Dovekie: One in the surf off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 23 Oct (Brian Patteson) was incredibly early, possibly the earliest ever seen in the Carolinas.

Black-legged Kittiwake: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report of an immature bird photographed on Lake Hickory on the border of Alexander Co and Catawba Co, NC, 17 Nov (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby). If accepted, this report would provide the second record of this species in the NC Piedmont.

Sabine's Gull: Sightings, all made in NC, included a juvenile at Cape Point, Dare Co, 13 Sep (Brian Patteson); two juveniles photographed on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, 15 Sep (Henry Link, m. obs.); five juveniles off Cape Point, 15 Sep (Andrew Thornton); one juvenile over the Neuse River in New Berm, Craven Co, 2 Oct (Wade Fuller); and a juvenile at Cape Point, 10 Oct (Patteson).

Little Gull: An adult bird at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 25 Nov (Gordon Brown) through 6 Dec (Kevin Hudson) was a great find for a site in the Piedmont.

Laughing Gull: Several were reported at inland sites after the passage of tropical storms, the farthest inland of which were individuals photographed on Lake Hartwell in Anderson Co, SC, following Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep (Joel Ludlam, m. obs.) and on Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, following Hurricane Nate, 9 Nov (Henry Link, m. obs.). Up to 3000 lingered around Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, in late November (John Fussell, Martin Wall, m. obs.) because of commercial shrimping activity in that area.

Iceland Gull: One was seen in flight over North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 15 Nov (Christine Stoughton-Root, et al.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 45 near the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 25 Sep (Martin Wall) and 25 on Waives Island, Horry Co, SC, 29 Sep (Chris Hill, David Williams, et al.) were good counts for those sites.

Great Black-backed Gull: One photographed on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.) was a great find for a site so far inland.

Brown Noddy: Three individuals were seen and photographed along the Carolina coast following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 12 Sep—over the surf off Oak Island, Brunswick Co, NC, (Robert Meehan); on the beach near the jetty at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, (Paul Laurent); and on the beach on the Isle of Palms, Charleston Co, SC, (Emily Davis, *fide* Matthew Campbell). The two reports from SC are pending review by the SC BRC.

Sooty Tern: Multiple sightings were made associated with the passage of Hurricane Irma, with ten off Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 Sep (David Gardner) being the highest count. Ten moribund or injured Sooty Terns, mostly found in Charleston Co and Georgetown Co, SC, were reported to the Avian Conservation Center in Awendaw, SC, 12-16 Sep, including one at an inland site in Orangeburg Co, SC, 13 Sep (Emily Davis, *fide* Matthew Campbell). Sightings made in the western half of the Carolinas included one at the dam on Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 12 Sep (Irvin Pitts); one on Lake Hartwell, Anderson Co, SC, 12 Sep (Scott Davis, et al.); one on Lake Norman at the border of Iredell Co, Lincoln Co, and Mecklenburg Co, NC, 12-14 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.); and at least five on J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir, McCormick Co, SC, 12 Sep (Mark Vukovich, m. obs.). Pending review by the NC BRC were reports of individuals at two sites in the NC mountains—along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, 12-13 (Doug Johnston, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson, m. obs.) and at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, 12 Sep (Johnston, Thompson, Jay Wherley).

Bridled Tern: A juvenile photographed on a dock on Store Creek, Edisto Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 Sep (Sidney Gauthreaux) was our only hurricane-related sighting.

Least Tern: An immature Least Tern lingered around the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, until the late date of 6 Oct (Martin Wall, m. obs.).

Caspian Tern: Locally unusual were four at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 6 Sep (Simon Thompson); two at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes Co, NC, 6 Sep (Guy McGrane); and one along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 12 Sep (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Butler). One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 8 Nov (Eddie Owens, m. obs.) was late for a site in the Piedmont.

Black Tern: 650 on the spit at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Sep (Greg Massey, Harry Sell) was a notable count. One seen from the Knotts Island Ferry, Currituck Co, NC, 17 Oct (Steve Ritt) was quite late.

Roseate Tern: One was photographed resting amongst other terns at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 18 Sep (Brian Patteson).

Common Tern: Three at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes Co, NC, 6 Sep (Guy McGrane) were locally unusual. Sightings over inland lakes following the passage of Hurricane Irma included three at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 12 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) and six at Lake Norman, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.).

Sandwich Tern: 35 flying west off the Oceanana Pier in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Nov (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count for that later date.

Black Skimmer: Peak counts were 1100 flying north off Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 25 Oct (Paul Serridge, et al.) and 1200 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 18 Nov and 3 Dec (Sam Cooper).

White-tailed Tropicbird: An adult was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 26 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-throated Loon: A juvenile photographed on Oak Hollow Lake in Guilford Co, NC, 14 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was a good find for an inland site.

Northern Fulmar: There was an influx of this species off the NC coast in early October, with 24 seen on a fishing trip off Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, 7 Oct (Jesse Anderson, Ed Corey) and moribund individuals found on the beaches of Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 10 Oct (Jamie Adams) and Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, 15 Oct (Derb Carter).

Trindade Petrel: One was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 11 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Fea's Petrel: One was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 25 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater (Scopoli's): Injured individuals were found on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, following the passage of Hurricane Irma, 13 Sep, and on the Isle of Palms, Charleston Co, SC, following the passage of Hurricane Nate, 10 Oct, but unfortunately did not survive rehabilitation (Emily Davis, *vide* Matthew Campbell).

Great Shearwater: From the summer period, The Avian Conservation Center in Awendaw, SC, received reports of ten individual Great Shearwaters found on beaches in Charleston Co and Beaufort Co, SC, 19 Jun through 27 Jun, around the same time there was an influx of the species along the NC coast (Emily Davis, *vide* Matthew Campbell).

Wood Stork: Post-breeding dispersal resulted in multiple sightings in the Triangle area of NC—one in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, border of Durham Co and Chatham Co, 13-22 Aug (Matt Spangler, m. obs.); one at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, 27 Aug (Lynn Erla Beegle) through 3 Sep (Ricky Davis); five in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, 12 Sep (Jeffrey Greco, m. obs.); and one in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, 6-15 Oct (Tom Driscoll, m. obs.). 58 at Neuseway Park in Kinston, Lenoir Co, NC, 2 Sep (Dana Miller, et al.) was a good count for that area. Peak counts at sites along the coast were 117 in Sunset Beach,

Brunswick Co, NC, 31 Aug (Maria Smith, David Weber) and 550 on Murphy Island, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Oct (Felicia Sanders).

Magnificent Frigatebird: A juvenile over Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Aug (Judy Morr) was the only one reported this period.

Brown Booby: Immature individuals were photographed resting on the Oceanic Pier, after reportedly colliding with it, in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 5 Aug (Sheila Wakefield, m. obs.) and in Charleston Co, SC, 8 Aug (Meghan Galipeau). Following the passage of Hurricane Irma, a juvenile was seen off the pier at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 12 Sep (Scott Hartley) and an injured individual found on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 14 Sep, was collected by a wildlife rehabilitator, later recovered, and was transported to Florida for release (Emily Davis, *fide* Matthew Campbell).

Great Cormorant: One on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 29 Nov through 15 Dec (Henry Link, m. obs.) was a great find for an inland site.

Anhinga: One on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 24 Aug through 8 Oct (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.) was unusual for a site so far from the coast.

American Bittern: Individuals at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 31 Oct (Gary Harbour) and at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 11-17 Nov (Wayne Forsythe) were good finds for those areas.

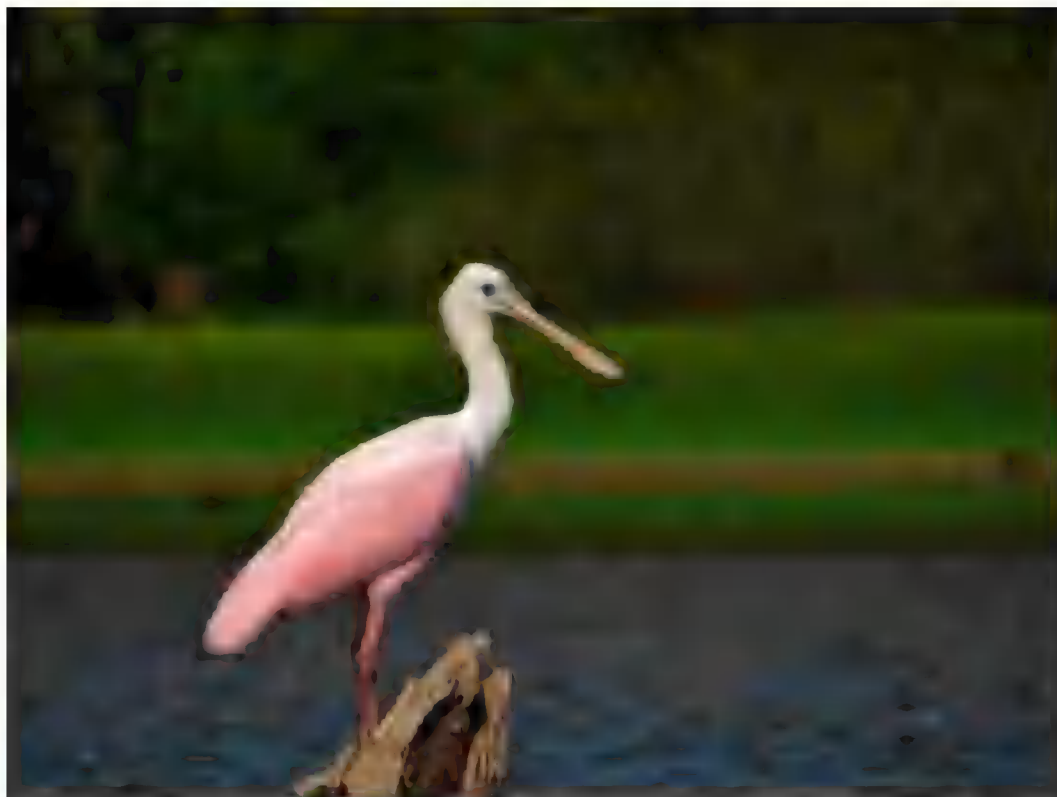
Reddish Egret: Two continued on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, from late summer through 8 Oct (John Fussell, et al), with a high count of three seen 11-26 Aug (Jesse Anderson, m. obs.). Two were seen on the east end of Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 11 Aug (Sam Cooper) and 20 Aug (Ricky Davis). A rare white-morph individual was seen on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 11 Aug and 24 Aug (David McLean).

Green Heron: One at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 23 Nov (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz) was quite late for a site in the mountain region.

Glossy Ibis: Nine at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 13 Sep (Eddie Owens, m. obs.) was a notable count for a site in the Piedmont.

Roseate Spoonbill: Very rare in the Piedmont with only four previous records, immature spoonbills were seen and photographed at three sites in the greater Triangle area of NC this fall—in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, border of Durham Co and Chatham Co, 16-27 Aug (Matt Spangler, m. obs.); in the Beaverdam Creek arm of Falls Lake in Granville Co, 8 Sep (Dan Edwards, et al.); and in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, 17-24 Sep (Spangler, m. obs.). Did these sightings represent three different individuals, or, more likely, did one individual simply move between the three sites? Four where NC-179B crosses the Calabash River near Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 12 Aug (Mark Vukovich) through 20 Aug (Ricky Davis) was a good count for NC.

The high count in SC was 95 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 19 Oct (Ann Truesdale).



Roseate Spoonbill, 17 Sep 2017, Chatham Co, NC
Photo by Matt Spangler

Turkey Vulture: 482 passing through Carvers Gap at Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, during the span of one hour, 10 Nov (Rick Knight) was a notable concentration.

Swallow-tailed Kite: Post-breeding dispersal resulted in sightings over agricultural fields in the western part of the Carolinas again this year. Those sightings included seven along US-76 in southeast Laurens Co, SC, 3 Aug (Marion Clark, et al.); four near Smyrna, York Co, SC, 7 Aug (*fide* Doug Pratt); two along NC-200 in Union Co, NC, 17 Aug (Martina Nordstrand); two along Steele Creek Rd in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 11-15 Aug (Kevin Metcalf, m. obs.); two along SC-418 in Laurens Co, SC, 23 Aug (Miles Groff); one in northwest Jackson Co, NC, 23 Aug (Tim Lewis); and four along SC-292 near Inman, Spartanburg Co, SC, 24 Aug (Susan Campbell).

Mississippi Kite: The peak count at the annual post-breeding congregation over the agricultural fields near Exit 75 on I-40 in McDowell Co, NC, was 23 on 21 Aug (Sage Church). Other sightings made in the NC mountains included six over Ferguson Fields, Swain Co, 21 Aug (Mark & Shelley McNeill); two along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, 2 Sep (Simon Thompson); four over the Mahogany Rock Overlook along the BRP in Alleghany Co, 9 Sep (Jim Keighton); and one along Ben Miller Rd in Watauga Co, 10 Sep (Guy McGrane).

Broad-winged Hawk: 2081, 1800 of which were seen in the span of 45 minutes, over Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 25 Sep (Dwayne Martin) was the largest kettle of migrants reported this fall.

Rough-legged Hawk: Two, a light-morph bird and a dark-morph bird, were seen over Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, 15 Nov (Clifton Avery, Guy McGrane).

Golden Eagle: Immature individuals were seen on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 2 Nov (Rick Knight) and over Coy Ham Rd in Ashe Co, NC, 20 Nov (Jesse Anderson).

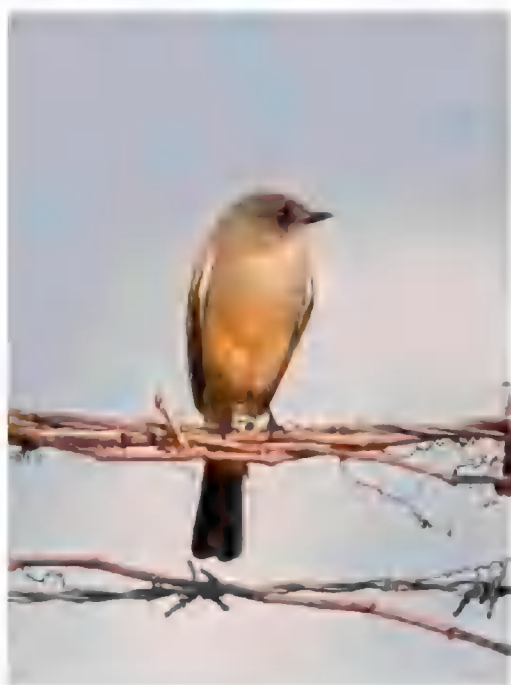
Snowy Owl: One photographed in an urban area of Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 16 Nov (Greg Ciener) was a harbinger of the mini-irruption that came later in Dec.

Short-eared Owl: Individuals along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 19 Oct and 11-12 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, m. obs.); at Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, 15 Nov (Clifton Avery, Guy McGrane); and at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 22 Nov (George McHenry, Andy Norris) were good finds.

Red-headed Woodpecker: One migrating over Round Bald on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 10 Nov (Rick Knight) was rather late for that high-elevation site.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: About half a dozen individuals were seen in the Carolinas this fall, all in the western half of NC, 22 Aug through 18 Sep (m. obs.).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: This species was well-reported in the Carolinas this fall, with over a dozen sightings made 2 Sep through 4 Oct (m. obs.). Though most sightings were made at sites in Piedmont, individuals along Burnt Mill Creek in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 8-11 Sep and 23 Sep (Sam Cooper, m. obs.) and at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 29 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) were unusual for the coast.



*Say's Phoebe, 16 Oct 2017,
Beaufort Co, NC
Photo by Martin Wall*

Alder Flycatcher: One seen and heard calling in the Sandhills Game Land in Richmond Co, NC, 20 Aug (Alan Krakauer, et al.) was unusual for that area.

Willow Flycatcher: One seen and heard calling along Burnt Mill Creek in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 5-16 Sep (Jamie Adams, m. obs.) was unusual for a site along the coast.

Say's Phoebe: Individuals were seen at the Voice of America site in the northwest corner of Beaufort Co, NC, 16 Oct through 5 Dec (Martin Wall, m. obs.) and at the intersection of Canal C Rd and Lake Rd in Washington Co, NC, 24-27 Nov (Don Rote, m. obs.).

Vermilion Flycatcher: A female was seen in Georgetown, Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Nov (Ritch Lilly, et al.) into winter, ending a five year drought of sightings in the Carolinas.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report of one photographed at Randolph Middle School in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 18 Nov (Ken Kneidel). If accepted, this sighting would provide the first photographic documentation of the species in the Piedmont region.

Great Crested Flycatcher: One photographed at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 18 Nov (Bruce Smithson) was incredibly late.

Western Kingbird: Individuals were seen at Airlie Gardens, New Hanover Co, NC, 15 Sep (Jamie Adams); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 Oct (Adams, Bruce Smithson, David Weesner) and 11 Oct (Weesner); and on Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13-16 Nov (David Gardner, m. obs.).

Eastern Kingbird: 80+ in flight over Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 1 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) was a notable concentration of migrants.

Gray Kingbird: One photographed at Garris Landing, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Sep (Stephen Thomas) was the only one reported this fall.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Two distinct individuals were seen and photographed in southeast NC in late November—a relatively short-tailed bird at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 18-19 Nov (Mark Jones, m. obs.) and a much longer-tailed bird in Ocean Isle Beach, Brunswick Co, 24 Nov (Jennifer Shockley, et al.).

Bell's Vireo: Two reports, both pending review by the NC BRC, were made in NC this fall—one seen and audio-recorded near the aquarium at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 8 Oct (Jelmer Poelstra) and one seen and photographed on the grounds of Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, 14-16 Nov (James Poling, m. obs.). The latter report is the most interesting because most previous records are from sites along the coast, and, if accepted, this sighting would provide the first record from the mountain region.

Philadelphia Vireo: This species was well-reported again this fall, with the peak of passage occurring in late September. Two at Cape Lookout, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Sep (Jamie Adams, David Weesner) were unusual for that area.

Warbling Vireo: Individuals at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 22 Aug (Sam Miller); in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 27 Aug (Sam Cooper); along the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 12 Sep and 29 Sep (Jim Gould); and at Mingo Point, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Sep (Jake Zadik, Juliana Smith) were good finds for those sites along the coast.

Tree Swallow: 4200 around Ecusta Pond in Transylvania Co, NC, 20 Sep (Michael Plauché) was a notable count for the mountain region.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One near Coinjock, Currituck Co, NC, 24 Nov (Steve Ritt) was late to depart.

Cave Swallow: Sightings, all made at sites along the NC coast, included six around the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, 21 Oct (Andrew Thornton, et al.); one in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, 26 Oct (Gilbert Grant); 12 in Waves, Dare Co, 26 Oct (Karen Lebing); two at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, 30 Oct (Martin Wall); 12 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, 31 Oct (Jamie Adams); one off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, 1 Nov (Nathan & Sarah Gatto); two at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 3 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.); and one at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, 11 Nov (Derb Carter). As usual, most Cave Swallows were found amongst large flocks of Tree Swallows.

American Pipit: One seen in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 17 Aug (Will Cook) was incredibly early.

Sprague's Pipit: One seen and photographed on the east end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 18-19 Oct (Hannah Conley, Kristen Oliver, Mattie VandenBoom, m. obs.) was the Carolina's first sighting in six years.

Lapland Longspur: Individuals were found in the company of Horned Larks in agricultural areas in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR in Washington Co, NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis) and where US-64 crosses over Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 25 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.).

Snow Bunting: After one was first photographed on the large rocks on the south side of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 18 Nov (Mark McShane), four were seen there 24-29 Nov (Brian Murphy, m. obs.).

Clay-colored Sparrow: At least 19 individuals were seen, many photographed, in the Carolinas this fall, 8 Sep through 12 Nov. One at Clark's Creek Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 30 Sep through 4 Oct (Barry Rowan, m. obs.) was notable for being the only sighting made outside of the coastal plain.

Lark Sparrow: Individuals were seen at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 8-10 Sep (Chandra Biggerstaff, Martin Wall); in Buxton Woods, Dare Co, NC, 14 Sep (Megan Baker, Michael Gosselin) and 19 Oct (Marcia Lyons, et al.); and at Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 21 Sep (Maggie Peretto).

Lincoln's Sparrow: This species began passing through the NC mountains in late September, and by the end of the period sightings had been made at dozens of sites across the Carolinas. Five at Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 18 Oct (Aaron Steed) and four along Canal D Rd in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR in Washington Co, NC, 12 Nov (Ricky Davis) were the two highest counts. Locally unusual were individuals along the Fourteen Mile Creek Trail, Lexington Co, SC, 19-21 Oct (Irvin Pitts, m. obs.); at Lynchburg Savanna Heritage Preserve, Lee Co, SC, 5 Nov (Andy Harrison); and on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 22 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

White-throated Sparrow: An adult photographed in Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, 2 Sep (Casey Girard, Karen Hogan) was very early.

White-crowned Sparrow: An immature bird photographed at Umstead SP, Wake Co, NC, 20 Sep (Neil Skoog) was somewhat early.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: An immature female seen on the lawn in front of the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, 12 Aug (Jeff Lewis) may have been the same immature female seen around the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 22-27 Aug (Michael Gosselin, m. obs.). Another individual, either an adult female or immature male, was seen in a yard on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Oct (Peter Vankevich).

Bobolink: One at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 9 Nov (John Fussell, Martin Wall, et al.) was somewhat late.

Worm-eating Warbler: One lingered along the Woodland Trail at Charleston Southern University, Charleston Co, SC, until 23 Oct (Charles Donnelly).

Golden-winged Warbler: Rare along the coast, two Golden-winged Warblers at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 29 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) were notable.

Swainson's Warbler: One caught at a banding station on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 14 Oct (Brandon Connare, et al.) was somewhat late.

Tennessee Warbler: One seen at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 7 Nov (Paul Serridge) was late.

Nashville Warbler: One at Swann WTP in Forsyth Co, NC, 18 Aug (Derek Hudgins) was rather early, while one photographed at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 4 Nov (Takayuki Uchida) was rather late. Dozens of sightings were made across the Carolinas in September and October.

Connecticut Warbler: A first-year bird photographed at Mason Farm Biological Reserve, Orange Co, NC, 3 Oct (Jan Hansen, Jelmer Poelstra) was the only one reported in the Carolinas this fall.

Mourning Warbler: Individuals were seen at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, where photographed, 10 Sep (Jay Wherley, m. obs.) and in east Mecklenburg Co, NC, 10 Sep (Taylor Piephoff).

American Redstart: Late to depart were individuals in Gloucester, Carteret Co, NC, where photographed, 7 Nov (Geneva Pigott) and on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 24 Nov (Carl & Cathy Miller, David McLean).

Kirtland's Warbler: A first-year bird was captured at a banding station on Big Bald Mountain, border of Unicoi Co, Tennessee and Yancey Co, NC, 3 Oct (Evan Buck, Mark Hopey, et al.). Hopey notes that this Kirtland's Warbler was "the first and only in 41 years of migration banding at Big Bald." This record is pending review by the NC BRC.



*Kirtland's Warbler, 3 Oct 2017,
Yancey Co, NC
Photo by Evan Buck*

Cape May Warbler: One photographed in Huntersville, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 10 Nov (Eric Keith) was late to depart.

Bay-breasted Warbler: One seen at Ninety Six National Historic Site, Greenwood Co, SC, 6 Nov (Irvin Pitts) was late to depart.

Yellow Warbler: One photographed at Magnolia Gardens, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Nov (Takayuki Uchida) was late to depart.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: One seen along the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 23-28 Sep (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.) was unusual for a site on the Outer Banks. Four at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 29 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) was a good count for a site along the coast.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's): A western race Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen and photographed in a yard in Lexington Co, SC, 19-23 Nov (Irvin Pitts).

Black-throated Green Warbler: One at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 3 Nov (Simon Harvey) was late.

Wilson's Warbler: This species was well-reported this fall, with a couple dozen sightings made in September and October. One photographed at the WTP in Conway, Horry Co, SC, 30 Nov (Chris Hill, John Hutchens) was quite late.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 150 at Ridge Junction, along the BRP in Yancey Co, NC, 25 Sep (Cynthia Donaldson, et al.) and 145+ at Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 27 Sep (Rick Knight) were impressive totals. 16 in north Wake Co, NC, 27 Sep (Kyle Kittelberger) was a notable count for the Piedmont. One at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Nov (Ricky Davis) was late to depart.

Blue Grosbeak: Late to depart were immature individuals at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 9-10 Nov (Martin Wall) and at Lake Wilson, Wilson Co, NC, 19 Nov (Tedi McManus, Mark Hopey).

Indigo Bunting: Late to depart were individuals photographed in Columbia, Tyrrell Co, NC, 17 Nov (Jeff Beane, et al.); at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 17 Nov (Scott Davis); and at a feeder in Williston, Barnwell Co, SC, 23 Nov (Julia Sitler).

Painted Bunting: An adult male caught during a banding event at Prairie Ridge Ecostation, Wake Co, NC, 18 Nov (John Gerwin, Pam Diamond, et al.) was very unusual for the Piedmont, especially in late fall. From the Spring 2017 period, an adult male visiting a feeder just east of Greenville, Pitt Co, NC, 2-5 Apr (Veronica Pantelidis) was unusual for a site in the inner coastal plain.



Painted Bunting, 18 Nov 2017, Wake Co, NC

Photo by Pam Diamond

Dickcissel: There were about 20 Dickcissels reported in the Carolinas this fall, eight of which were seen at sites in Dare Co, NC, 19 Aug through 14 Oct (m. obs.). One lingered from summer at the breeding site along Howerton Rd in Guilford Co, NC, until 27 Sep (Andrew Thornton). Two seen together at Clark's Creek Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 3-8 Oct (Dennis Kent, John Scavetto, m. obs.) were noteworthy, as most fall sightings are of individuals.

The Chat Goes Online

Steve Shultz

After eighty years as a tangible periodical, *The Chat* joins the ranks of publications published solely online, beginning with Volume 81. Individual members may access current and previous calendar year editions of *The Chat* by logging on at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/>.

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www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

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General Field Notes Editors
North Carolina
South Carolina

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Briefs for the Files

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2016 Fall Bird Counts in South Carolina

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Five Fall Bird Counts were held in 2016. The counts were held September 10 through October 1 in Greenville, Spartanburg, Cherokee, and Aiken counties and in Congaree National Park. The 109 participants recorded a total of 129 species and 10,673 individuals. The species total was well short of the 146 reported last year and the high of 168 in 2011. The 17 species of warblers reported was also well below the 27 reported last year and the high of 29 reported in 2010. Several of the compilers suggested that hot, dry conditions this fall may have contributed their reduced counts.

Greenville County: September 17; 100 species; 3380 individuals

Compiler: Paul Serridge
4 Audrey Lane
Greenville, SC 29615

Participants: Dave Baker, Joan Baker, Shelby Birch, Andrew Bowers, Jim Buschur, Marion Clark, Steve Compton, Donnie Coody, Denise DuPon, Laura Eison, Matthew Eison, Sherie Gamble, Terry Gamble, Chip Gilbert, Gary Harbour, Pam Helton, Genny Hill, J. B. Hines, Linda Hunter, Jerry Johnson, Jo Anne Keasler, David Kirk, Bill Koon, Len Kopka, Kevin Kubach, Dennis Lee, Tim Lee, Yves Limpalair, Carole Lyle, Chris Peak, Merikay Pirrone, Michael Robertson, Barbara Serridge, Paul Serridge, Lily Shelnut, Tim Shelnut, Larry Sturm, Pat Sturm, Dennis Trapp, Judith Webb, Anne Williams, Arthur Williams, Cindy Womble, Louis Womble, Susan Zickos.

Spartanburg County: September 24; 84 species; 3954 individuals

Compiler: Lyle Campbell
126 Greengate Lane
Spartanburg, SC 29307-2215

Participants: Tim Brown, Dan Bryant, Lewanna Caldwell, David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Dan Codispoti, Cheryl Cooksey, Mark Cooksey, Sharon Donovan, Ed Elam, Kathleen Elam, J. B.

Hines, Frank Hull, Phyllis Hull, Jack Jennings, Jerry Johnson, Don Knight, Mary Knight, Nancy Mandlove, Joe Mitchell, Roberta Mitchell, Nora Moore, Terry Moore, Bill Myers, Mary Ann Myers, Bob Powell, Sandra Powell, Doug Rayner, Mack Shealy, Elizabeth Storm, Jon Storm, Melissa Storm, Kristin Taylor, Gerald Thrumond, M. B. Ulmer, Kay Wealden, Richard Wealden, Dan Wootton, Nancy Wootton

Spartanburg had a fair Fall Count, considering that several key birders were again unable to participate. Birds were scarce, perhaps reflecting weeks of hot, dry weather. We had 84 total species, including only six warbler species. Sparrows and blackbirds were scarce. Four chimneys attracted 1200 migrating Chimney Swifts at dusk. Best birds were Bald Eagle (second year), Gadwall, Cape May Warbler, and Swainson's Thrush.

Cherokee County: September 10; 62 species; 739 individuals

Compiler: Lyle Campbell

126 Greengate Lane

Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Claude Cobb, Randy Fowler, J. B. Hines, Jerry Johnson, Karla Lavender, Janet Tsiknias

Ten Cherokee Count birders found 62 species, including only two species of warblers. Birds were scarce, possibly reflecting weeks of hot, dry weather. Our numbers from yard and feeder watches were up. Best bird was a Broad-winged Hawk.

Aiken County: October 1; 83 species; 1528 individuals

Compiler: Anne Waters

1621 Apple Valley Dr.

Augusta, GA 30906

Participants: Meg Francouer, Wade Gassman, Paul Koehler, Mat Malain, Eric Monaco, Mary Pallon, Lois Stacey, Calvin Zippler

Congaree National Park: September 25; 53 species; 1072 individuals

Compiler: John Grego

Participants: Ron Ahle, John Grego, Kathleen O'Grady, Alice Steinke, Angela Valasori

A Fall Migration Count was held September 25 at Congaree National Park. Weather was 70 degrees in the morning and 90 degrees in the afternoon, and mosquitoes were active in the floodplain. Thrushes were

heard overhead in good numbers from the Visitor Center parking lot pre-dawn, with the nocturnal flight call count dominated by Swainson's Thrush. Birding in the eastern portion of the park was less intensive than usual, which cut down on species diversity in general and migrant counts in particular. 53 species were observed on the day.

Table 1. Fall 2016 Bird Counts in South Carolina

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck				4		4
Canada Goose	173	562	57	32		824
Wood Duck	63	6		32	2	103
Gadwall		2				2
Mallard	101	115	5	3		224
Am. Black Duck	1	2				3
Hooded Merganser		3				3
Red-breasted Merganser		6				6
Northern Bobwhite	2		1			3
Wild Turkey		6	36			42
Pied-billed Grebe	1	1		4		6
Rock Pigeon	14	123	45	12		194
Eurasian Collared-Dove	1	2		1		4
Mourning Dove	187	161	62	41	4	455
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	2	1	1	5	2	11
Common Nighthawk	1	1				2
Eastern Whip-poor-will				1		1
Chimney Swift	134	1276	22	14	14	1460
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	722	42	2	3		769
Rufous Hummingbird	1					1
Killdeer	31	25	21	16		93
Least Sandpiper				56		56
Pectoral Sandpiper				1		1
Spotted Sandpiper	1	1				2
Solitary Sandpiper	2		2			4
Lesser Yellowlegs				18		18
Greater Yellowlegs				4		4
Wilson's Phalarope				1		1
Double-crested Cormorant	1	9	2			12
Anhinga				6		6
Great Blue Heron	8	16	4	5	3	36
Great Egret	10	4		13		27
Little Blue Heron				10		10
Cattle Egret				79		79
Green Heron	2					2
Black Vulture	26	9	8	9	12	64
Turkey Vulture	30	67	25	15	3	140
Osprey	1		2			3
Bald Eagle		1			1	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	2		1		4
Cooper's Hawk	1	2		1		4
Red-shouldered Hawk	12	8	5	6	5	36
Broad-winged Hawk			2			2
Red-tailed Hawk	5	5	6	2	2	20
Eastern Screech-Owl	2			4		6
Great Horned Owl	2	4		8	2	16
Barred Owl	3	1	1	9	15	29

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Belted Kingfisher	7	13	3	4		27
Red-headed Woodpecker	7	3	2	16	16	44
Red-bellied Woodpecker	41	33	13	34	23	144
Downy Woodpecker	29	30	2	18	10	89
Hairy Woodpecker	5	1	1		1	8
Red-cockaded Woodpecker				2		2
Northern Flicker	3	5	3	13	3	27
Pileated Woodpecker	33	6	4	23	15	81
American Kestrel	2	2	1	4		9
Peregrine Falcon	1			1		2
Eastern Wood-Pewee	15	6	5	8	2	36
Acadian Flycatcher	1	2			3	6
Eastern Phoebe	29	15	9	11	1	65
Great Crested Flycatcher			2			2
Eastern Kingbird	1	1				2
White-eyed Vireo	32	4	8	29	16	89
Yellow-throated Vireo	2	1			2	5
Blue-headed Vireo	5					5
Red-eyed Vireo	11	2			1	14
Blue Jay	116	81	23	77	9	306
American Crow	306	149	47	57	12	571
Fish Crow	16	2	3	5		26
crow sp.					2	2
Common Raven	5					5
Tree Swallow	6			9		15
N. Rough-winged Swallow				165	2	167
Barn Swallow		1		16		17
Carolina Chickadee	100	98	32	41	12	283
Tufted Titmouse	78	85	35	75	30	303
White-breasted Nuthatch	39	19	7	16	10	91
Brown-headed Nuthatch	10	12	1	15	6	44
House Wren	2	12		2		16
Carolina Wren	91	60	26	59	45	278
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	6				1	7
Eastern Bluebird	119	47	20	10		196
Veery					88	88
Gray-cheeked Thrush					5	5
Swainson's Thrush	1	3			571	575
Wood Thrush					19	19
American Robin	74	53	23		1	151
Gray Catbird	16	3		3		22
Brown Thrasher	26	21	1	22	1	71
Northern Mockingbird	50	52	8	32		142
European Starling	52	53	58	115		278
Cedar Waxwing	15					15
House Sparrow	2	20	2			24
House Finch	55	70	10	2		137
Purple Finch		2				2
American Goldfinch	133	30	8	2	1	174
Eastern Towhee	17	5	6	21		49
Chipping Sparrow	4	14	10	2		30
Field Sparrow	2	14	8			24
Song Sparrow	3	6				9
Dark-eyed Junco	12					12
Eastern Meadowlark	1		2			3
Baltimore Oriole	1					1
Red-winged Blackbird		1	1	1		3

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Brown-headed Cowbird		133	3	2		138
Common Grackle	18	129	8	4		159
Ovenbird	1					1
Worm-eating Warbler		1			1	2
Northern Waterthrush					1	1
Black-and-white Warbler	2				2	4
Tennessee Warbler	9					9
Common Yellowthroat	8			4	5	17
Hooded Warbler	5			1	2	8
American Redstart	22	3	2	4	18	49
Cape May Warbler	1	1				2
Northern Parula	7			11	19	37
Magnolia Warbler	3			4	1	8
Yellow Warbler	1	1				2
Chestnut-sided Warbler	6			2		8
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1					1
Palm Warbler	15			12		27
Pine Warbler	9	11	8	49	16	93
Yellow-throated Warbler	2	1		2	1	6
Summer Tanager	4	4	2	3	6	19
Scarlet Tanager	8	1	1		1	11
Northern Cardinal	105	160	17	83	15	380
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	2				3
Blue Grosbeak	3		2	3		8
Indigo Bunting	26	7	3	15	1	52
Painted Bunting				1		1
Species	100	84	62	83	53	129
Individuals	3380	3954	739	1528	1072	10673
Regular Count						
Hours foot		30	10	14.3	10	64.3
Hours car		12	8.5	17.85		38.35
Hours canoe/kayak				3		3
Hours boat		7.5				7.5
Hours bicycle		0.5		3		3.5
Miles foot		17.5	11.5	4.5	4.5	38
Miles car		343	174	111.45		628.45
Miles canoe/kayak				2		2
Miles boat		17				17
Miles bicycle		6		4		10
# Regular parties	16	15	7	6		44
# Regular observers	45	21	8	8	5	87
# Species		80	61	79		
# Individuals		2184	653	1482		
Stationary						
Hours Stationary				2		2
# Parties Stationary				1		1
# Observers Stationary				1		1
# Species				15		15
# Individuals				24		24

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Feeder Watch						
Hours Feeder Watch		52	8.5			60.5
# Feeder Watchers		28	3			31
# Feeder Stations		17	3			20
# Species		39	26			
# Individuals		564	85			649
Nocturnal						
Hours Nocturnal		4	0.5	4.25	1.25	10
Miles Nocturnal		12	0	8.5	5	25.5
# Parties Nocturnal		4	1	3		8
# Observers Nocturnal		6	1	3		10
# Species		4	1	7		
# Individuals		1206	1	30		1237
Total						
Party Hours	75.5	102	27.5	44.4	11.25	260.65
Party Miles		383.5	185.5	130.45	9.5	708.95
Time start	0600	0700	0700	0515	0530	
Time stop	1930	2200	2100	1900	1825	
Temperature: pre-dawn		70	68	62		
dawn		69	68	62	70	
AM	61	77	80	69		
noon		81	88	76		
PM	86	87	95	86	90	
sunset		80	80	80		
night		77	78	78		
wind: pre-dawn				0		
dawn	<5			0		
AM	<5			SW3		
noon	<5			SW5		
PM	<5			WSW7		
sunset	<5			W5		
night				W5		
%clouds: pre-dawn		0	0	20		
dawn		0	0	20		
AM		0	0	20		
noon		0	0	10		
PM		0	0	15		
sunset		0	0	20		
night		0	0	20		
precipitation: pre-dawn	0	0	0	0		
dawn	0	0	0	0		
AM	0	0	0	0		
noon	0	0	0	0		
PM	0	0	0	0		
sunset	0	0	0	0		
night		0	0	0		

First Record of Mountain Plover in North Carolina

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On January 26, 2016, I found an unusual plover with a buffy tinge to the breast at Cape Lookout National Seashore, Carteret County, NC. The plover, noticeably larger than the expected *Charadrius* species, was roosting on a large sandflat on the southern shore of Ophelia Inlet on South Core Banks. The purpose of my visit to this site was to survey for Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*), Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) and Red Knot (*Calidris cantus*) as part of the 2016 International Piping Plover Census.

After ruling out the survey species, consulting the Ibird application, and studying the bird from a distance of 20 meters with a spotting scope, I believed that the unusual bird was a Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*). The tide was high during the observation period, and all shorebirds were roosting. The Mountain Plover made some minor movements, but primarily rested near some debris with other shorebirds. Piping and Wilson's plovers are common birds of the seashore, with 16 Piping Plovers recorded at this wintering site during the census. Snowy Plovers are infrequent summer visitors. Though similar in overall color and common as a wintering species, Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) was eliminated due to its orange legs and smaller size. Photographs were taken for further study and documentation (Figure 1).

Back in the office, I consulted The Sibley Guide to Birds (Sibley 2000) to confirm species identification and range. Close inspection of the pictures appeared to confirm my initial identification of Mountain Plover, and lack of orange/buffy fringes to the feathers of the mantle and scapulars suggested that the bird was a non-breeding adult. Gender could not be determined. Information on the sighting and photographs of the bird were submitted to The Carolina Bird Club website's photo gallery. Multiple observers ventured out to Ophelia Inlet to relocate the bird and pictures were shared of re-sightings on January 29 and 31, 2016 and February 1 and 9, 2016.

The Mountain Plover is a bird of interior and western North America. It breeds in open, flat, disturbed areas from Alberta and Saskatchewan to Texas and winters primarily in California's Central Valley. It is described as a vagrant along the East Coast (Paulson, 2005). Haymen et. al., (1986) reports sightings in Florida, Virginia, and Massachusetts. More recently a sighting from October 10, 2007 at Huntington Beach State Park, SC was accepted by the South Carolina Bird Records Committee

(Slyce, et al, 2009). There is no prior record of this species in North Carolina.

Literature Cited:

Haymen, P., J. Marchant, and T. Prater. 1986. Shorebirds: An Identification Guide. Houghton Mifflin, Massachusetts.

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Sibley, D.A. 2000. National Audubon Society: The Sibley Guide to Birds. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Slyce D., G. Beaton, L. Glover, C. Hill, T. Piephoff, W. Post, and S. Wagner. 2009. 2008 Annual Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee. *Chat* 73:105-106.



Figure 1. Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*) roosting with a Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) and Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) at Ophelia Inlet, NC on January 26, 2016. Photo by Jon Altman.

2017 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

Susan M. Campbell¹, Chair, Keith E. Camburn, Samuel Cooper, W. Jefferson Lemons, Michael W. D. McCloy, Jeffrey S. Pippen, Simon R. B. Thompson, Joshua L. Southern, Robert W. Van Epps

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The make-up of the 2017 North Carolina Bird Records Committee included additions of Keith Camburn, Jeffrey Pippen, and Robert Van Epps as voting members; and the retention of Richard J. Davis and Harry E. LeGrand Jr. in advisory capacities. Taylor Piephoff, Steven Shultz, and Nathan Swick rotated off the Committee for at least a one-year hiatus.

Accepted Reports

Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) (17-01). A written description and photos of an adult male banded in Buxton (Dare) on 22 January 2017 were submitted by Susan Campbell. The bird was first observed by Ann Maddock on 24 January 2017 and persisted through 15 March. Both the written material as well as the photos were accepted unanimously by the committee. This represents the fourth record for the state.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (17-02). Two written descriptions (Simon Thompson and John Koon) as well as photos were submitted of a bird on the French Broad River (Buncombe) in mid-February 2017. The committee voted unanimously to accept all of the material. This record is the eighth for NC and the first for the mountains.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (17-03). Written details and photos were submitted by Ed Corey for a bird present at Falls Lake (Wake) on 25-26 May 2017. The committee voted unanimously to accept the material. This record constitutes the third Piedmont record and the first from that region to be documented by photos.

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) (17-04). John Fussell submitted both a written report as well as a photo of a bird located at North River Farm (Carteret) on 3 June 2017. This record was approved (8-1). It represents a first for the summer season in North Carolina.

Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma monorhis*) (17-05). Brian Patteson located an individual 30 nm SE of Hatteras (Dare) on 9 June 2017.

Both written details and a photo were submitted. The committee voted unanimously to accept this report, the fourth state record.

Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) (17-06). Wayne Forsythe submitted a written report as well as photos for a bird found on 22 July 2017 at Hendersonville (Henderson). Though twice as many members accepted the photos as did not (6-3), such a voting verdict does not accept a record; there must be no more than one non-accept vote for approval. Fortunately, the written material was approved unanimously, thus providing the first mountain state record for the species.

Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) (17-08). Simon Thompson located an individual at Hooper Lane (Henderson) on 13 September 2017. A written report and photos were submitted to the committee. The material was accepted unanimously. This record is the first for the mountain region of the state.

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*) (17-10). James Poling submitted both written details as well as photos for a bird at Warren Wilson College (Buncombe) from 14 November until at least 16 November 2017. The material was accepted by the committee (unanimously for the photos but 6-2 for the written report). This record represents the seventh for the state and the first for the NC mountains.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (17-11). Dwayne Martin submitted both a written report and photo for an individual found on Lake Hickory (Catawba) on 17 November 2017. The committee voted unanimously to accept the record. This record is the second for the species in the Piedmont region and is the third inland record in the state.

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*) (17-12). A written description and photos of an adult female banded in Southern Shores (Dare) on 19 November 2017 were submitted by Susan Campbell. The bird was first observed by Jeff Lewis on 30 October 2017 and was present until 1 January 2018, when it was found deceased under the feeder, apparently unable to survive the unusual cold spell that extended all the way to the coast that week. The committee voted unanimously to accept both the written report and the photos. This record is the fourth for the state and is the first female of the species documented here.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) (17-13). A written report was received from Ricky Davis of a bird seen on 18 December 2016 at Fort Macon State Park (Carteret). The committee voted unanimously to accept the report. This represents the first winter record for NC (Southern 2017).

Non-Accepted Reports

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) (17-09). A vote was taken on a written description of five individuals seen flying offshore from a cruise ship off Core Banks (Carteret) on 6 November 2017. Unfortunately no photos were obtained and the description was vague. The committee voted

6-1 not to accept the report, given the insufficient details, especially for what would have been a first record for North Carolina.

Unresolved

There are no unresolved reports as the result of voting during 2017. However, two reports - Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) and Common Swift (*Apus apus*) - were received late in the year that are expected be taken up by the committee in 2018; neither of these species is on the state list.

A list of all the species reviewed can be seen at:
<http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/NC/reports.html>.

Summary

This year's voting resulted in a number of seasonal firsts, as well as four first records for the mountains of North Carolina. Even though no changes in status of Accepted species occurred as a result of committee activity, the list has been reduced by one. The decision by the American Ornithological Society to lump Thayer's Gull with Iceland Gull (Fifty-eighth supplement to the American Ornithological Society's Check-list of North American Birds) now means there are no longer 482 but 481 species on the state list (466 Definitive, 13 Provisional, and two Not Established).

Literature Cited

Chesser, R. Terry, Kevin J. Burns, Carla Cicero, Jon L. Dunn, Andrew W. Kratter, Irby J. Lovette, Pamela C. Rasmussen, J. V. Remsen, Jr., James D. Rising, Douglas F. Stotz, and Kevin Winker. 2017. Fifty-eighth supplement to the American Ornithological Society's Check-list of North American Birds. *Auk* 134(3):751-773.

LeGrand, H., J. Haire, N. Swick, and T. Howard. 2017. Birds of North Carolina: their Distribution and Abundance.

Southern, J. 2017. Briefs for the Files. *Chat* 81:49.



H Douglas Pratt

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2017-2018, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **CBC** – Christmas Bird Count, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **Mt** – Mount, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **St** – Street, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Snow Goose: Several small flocks were seen in the southern NC mountains this winter, including up to nine at Carolina Lake, Transylvania Co, 21 Dec through 1 Jan (Kevin Lash, m. obs.) and six at Mills River WTP, Henderson Co, NC, 17 Feb (Denise Hargrove). Individuals in Wilkes Co, 3 Dec (Dwayne Martin) through 5 Jan (Guy McGrane), at the Biltmore Estate, Buncombe Co, 11 Jan through 17 Feb (Doug Johnston, m. obs.); and at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, 2 Feb (Bob Olthoff, Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, et al.) were also unusual for the NC mountains.

Ross's Goose: Atypically, in NC, more sightings were made in the Mountain region than in the Coastal Plain this winter. One seen at the Biltmore Estate, Buncombe Co, throughout December, was joined by three other small white geese, either Ross's Geese or Snow x Ross's Goose hybrids, 11 Jan (Doug Johnston, m. obs.). Two were seen on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, 2-17 Jan (Bob Olthoff, Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m. obs.). Two were seen in agricultural fields along US-64 in Tyrell Co and Washington Co, 15 Jan (Ed Corey) through 3 Feb (Ricky Davis). One photographed at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, 5 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff) was unusual for that area.

Greater White-fronted Goose: High counts included 14 at Pettigrew SP, Washington Co, NC, during its CBC, 27 Dec (Al Hooks, Guy McGrane); 12 at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, during its CBC, 29 Dec (Steve Shultz); 17 in Polk Co, NC, where photographed, 13 Jan (Michael Robertson); 15 at Lake Leroy, Oconee Co, SC, 21 Jan (Mark Hopey); 11 in the fields where US-64 crosses over Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 17 Feb (Jeff Lewis); and 27 at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 23 Feb (Jo Anne Keasler). Two hung around Kale Lake in Spartanburg Co, SC, 30 Dec (David Campbell) into March (m. obs.).

Cackling Goose: Three at the Beaufort Club golf course in Carteret Co, NC, 16 Dec (Martin Wall) were a first for that county. Other sightings included one in Forsyth Co, NC, 15 Dec through 2 Jan (m. obs.); one along the Nags Head causeway, Dare Co, NC, 1-4 Jan (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); two in Guilford Co, NC, 3-7 Jan (Henry Link, m. obs.); and one to five where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 9 Jan through 23 Feb (m. obs.).



*Cackling Geese
(with Canada
Goose)
16 December 2017
Carteret Co, NC
Photo by Martin
Wall*

Tundra Swan: Six on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 26 Dec (David & Susan Disher, m. obs.) were unusual for that area.

Eurasian Wigeon: Mattamuskeet NWR and Pea Island NWR, two of the more reliable sites to find this species in NC, hosted, respectively, one to three 14 Dec (Phil Doerr) through 18 Feb (Jamie Adams), and one to two 2 Dec (Al Hooks, Jeff Lewis) through early February (m. obs.). In SC, individuals were seen at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 23 Dec (Ed Blitch, Pam Ford, Jim Pope) through 19 Feb (Steve Compton) and at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, 8 Feb (Ritch Lilly).

American Wigeon: 30,683 in Hyde Co, NC, during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell) was the highest total on any 2017 Audubon CBC and a record total for that count.

Northern Pintail: 113,521 in Hyde Co, NC, during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell) was the highest total on any 2017 Audubon CBC and a record total for that count. 50 in Transylvania Co, NC, 15 Jan (Wayne Forsythe) was a notable count for the mountain region.

“Common Teal”: A Eurasian race Green-winged Teal was seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 3 Feb (Clyde Sorenson, et al.) and 8 Feb (Jeff Lewis).

Tufted Duck: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report of an apparent Tufted Duck seen and photographed on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 2 Feb (David McLean, David Youngblood) into spring (m. obs.). If accepted, this report would provide the first record of this Eurasian species in SC.

Lesser Scaup: 9000 on Stumpy Point Bay, Dare Co, NC, during the Alligator River NWR CBC, 30 Dec (Jay Ross, *fide* Jeff Lewis) was a noteworthy count.

King Eider: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report of an apparent hen King Eider seen and photographed at the 2nd Avenue Pier in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 7 Jan (Ritch Lilly) through 6 Feb (m. obs.).

Common Eider: Sightings included one at the pier at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 19 Nov through 28 Feb (William Kidwell, m. obs.); an adult drake at the Folly Beach Fishing Pier, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Nov through 18 Dec (Simon Harvey, m. obs.); two at Johnnie Mercer’s Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 1-3 Dec (Jamie Adams, m. obs.); two at Jennette’s Pier, Dare Co, NC, 16 Dec (Ricky Davis); two at Oregon Inlet, 1-3 Jan (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); and three in Beaufort Inlet off Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Feb (Martin Wall).

Harlequin Duck: An adult drake seen and photographed at Jennette’s Pier, Dare Co, NC, 30-31 Dec (m. obs.) was probably the same adult drake seen around the south end of the nearby Bonner Bridge at Oregon Inlet, 1-3 Jan (m. obs.). It’s also possible that the adult drake seen and photographed around the jetty at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 7-8 Jan (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.) was that same individual. Elsewhere, two hens were seen off the Coquina rock outcropping at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co,

NC, 29 Dec (Ron Clark, Matt Janson) and a first-year drake was photographed at the ferry dock in Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 3 Jan (Jeff Beane, Stephanie Horton).

Surf Scoter: Ten on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 15 Dec (John Haire, Marbry Hopkins) was a good count for an inland site. Other inland sightings included one on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 2 Dec (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, et al.); two on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 11 Dec (Henry Link, m. obs.); and one in Barnwell Co, SC, during the Savannah River Site CBC, 14 Dec (Peter Stangel).

White-winged Scoter: Inland sightings included 12 on Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 6 Jan (Dwayne Martin); up to eight on Oak Hollow Lake, Guilford Co, NC, 7 Jan through 15 Feb (Roger Shaw, m. obs.); three on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 7 Feb (John Haire); two on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 9 Feb (Matt Spangler); and two near the dam on Lake Gaston, Northampton Co, NC, 11 Feb (Ricky Davis).

Long-tailed Duck: There was an influx of this species on inland lakes in January, likely due to below-freezing temperatures at sites to the north. A few of the higher counts were seven on Lake Rhodhiss, Burke Co, 13 Jan (Michael Robertson); six on Oak Hollow Lake, Guilford Co, 14-16 Jan (Mike Turner, m. obs.); 22 on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, 14 Jan (John Haire); and five on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, 26 Jan (Matt Spangler). Sightings made at inland sites in SC included one at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, 10 Dec (George McHenry); two on Lake Wateree, Kershaw Co, 28 Dec through 5 Jan (Steve Patterson, m. obs.); three at Arcadia Farms in Orangeburg Co, 15 Jan (Julie Mobley); three on Lake Murray, Lexington Co, 6 Feb (Jennifer Shockley); and two on a pond in Ridgeville, Dorchester Co, 17-27 Feb (Tracee Clapper, m. obs.). Four around the Charleston Battery, Charleston Co, 5-20 Jan (Craig Watson, m. obs.) was a good number for a site so far south.

Common Goldeneye: This duck was well-reported after a period of below-normal temperatures in early January. High counts included five on a pond along SC-546 in Greenville Co, SC, 4-6 Jan (Yves Limpalair, m. obs.); 11 on Lake Hickory in Caldwell Co, NC, 10 Jan (Dwayne Martin); five on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 10-13 Jan (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.); eight on Beaverdam Reservoir, Wake Co, NC, 21 Jan (Harry LeGrand); 25 on the Cape Fear Fisher off the Ft Fisher Air Force Recreation Area, 3 Feb (Sam Cooper); ten on the Roanoke River in Northampton Co, NC, 11 Feb (Ricky Davis); and six on a pond in Wilkesboro, Wilkes Co, NC, 18 Feb (Guy McGrane).

Hooded Merganser: 1200 crowded into an unfrozen portion of Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, following a period of below-freezing temperatures, 7 Jan (Harry LeGrand) was a notable concentration.

Common Merganser: Like several other species of diving ducks, Common Mergansers were well-reported on lakes and ponds following a period of below freezing temperatures in early January. A few of the higher counts, all from NC, were 15 on Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, 4 Jan (Matt

Wangerin); six on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, 4 Jan (Vince Kloster); 15 on W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes Co, 5 Jan (Guy McGrane, et al.); seven on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, 8-11 Jan (Eddie Owens, m. obs.); seven on Beaverdam Reservoir, Wake Co, 11 Jan (Harry LeGrand); 15 at Swann WTP, Forsyth Co, 10-18 Feb (Shelley Rutkin, m. obs.); and six on Lake Gaston, Northampton Co, 11 Feb (Ricky Davis). A hen on Crystal Lake in Horry Co, SC, 5-29 Jan (Frank Lawkins, m. obs.) was unusual for a site so far south.

Red-necked Grebe: This species was well-reported this winter. Three photographed together near the southern end of the Bonner Bridge, Dare Co, NC, 15 Jan (Joe Donahue, et al.) and two off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 21 Jan (Jeff Lewis) were notable, as most sightings made in the Carolinas are of individuals. Individuals were seen on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 17 Nov through 5 Jan (Henry Link, m. obs.); at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 15 Dec through 17 Feb (m. obs.); off Mitchellville Beach Park, Beaufort Co, SC, 25 Dec (Andy Martin); on Lake Hickory, border of Alexander Co and Catawba Co, NC, 26-27 Dec (Dwayne Martin); at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 14 Jan through 16 Feb (m. obs.); off Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 20-24 Jan (m. obs.); at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 25 Jan (Chris Clack); on the Cape Fear River near Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 3 Feb (Sam Cooper); on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 9-17 Feb (Matt Spangler, m. obs.); and on Jarrett Bay, Carteret Co, NC, 26-27 Feb (Martin Wall, et al.).

Eared Grebe: Individuals were seen at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 30 Dec (Sam Cooper, et al.); at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 9 Jan (Brian Patteson), 17 Feb (Andrew Thornton) and 23 Feb (Jack Rogers); on the Cape Fear River near Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 Jan through 4 Feb (Bruce Smithson, m. obs.); at Glenburnie Quarry (restricted access), Craven Co, NC, 14 Feb (Ronnie Hewlette); and off North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 28 Feb (Gilbert Grant).

Common Ground-Dove: One photographed along Baldwin Elkins Rd in Bladen Co, NC, 27 Jan (Amy Padgett) was the first sighting made in NC in three years.

White-winged Dove: One visiting a feeder in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 23 Dec through 23 Mar (Wanda King, m. obs.) was the only one reported this winter.



*White-winged
Dove
13 February
2018
New Hanover
Co, NC
Photo by Sam
Cooper*

Chuck-will's-widow: One was briefly seen roosting on the ground before being flushed in Sneads Ferry, Onslow Co, NC, after a locally unusual five-inch snowfall, 5 Jan (Gilbert Grant).

Nightjar sp.: One, probably either a lingering Chuck-will's-widow or a lingering Eastern Whip-poor-will, was seen in the campground at Pettigrew SP, Washington Co, NC, during its CBC, 27 Dec (Guy McGrane).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Several birders who hosted wintering Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in their yards at sites along the coast noted that some hummingbirds did not survive a period of persistent below-freezing temperatures in early January (m. obs.).

Rufous Hummingbird: Sightings included an adult female visiting a feeder near Irmo, Lexington Co, SC, for a second winter in a row, 29 Nov into spring (Jerry Griggs); an adult male visiting a feeder in Black Mountain, Buncombe Co, NC, 4-19 Dec (Richard & Elizabeth Bruce); and an adult female visiting a feeder in Apex, Wake Co, NC, for a fourth winter in a row, banded 8 Feb (Susan Campbell).

Calliope Hummingbird: The immature male visiting a feeder in Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 27 Nov into winter, was last seen 6 Jan (Jeff Lemons).

Broad-billed Hummingbird: The individual that visited a feeder in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, during the late fall, was found moribund after a night of below freezing temperatures, 1 Jan (Jeff Lewis).

Purple Gallinule: One photographed on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, 15 Jan (*fide* Peter Vankevich) was unusual for the Carolinas in winter, especially for a site so far north.

Common Gallinule: 24 in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 17 Dec (*fide* John Fussell) was a good count for winter and the highest total on that CBC since 1984.

Sandhill Crane: Two seen in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, Washington Co, NC, from 12 Nov (Ricky Davis) were joined by a third crane 14 Dec (Greg Hudson) through 27 Feb (Stacy Barbour). Two wintered around the airport in Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, again this year, 14

Dec through 8 Mar (Martin Wall, m. obs.). Two at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 1-2 Feb (m. obs.) were unusual for that site, probably forced down by inclement weather. A flock of nine was seen in flight over Cherokee Co, NC, near Farner, Tennessee, 17 Feb (Dennis Hammond). The high count of the wintering flock at the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, was 70 cranes on 21 Dec (Jay Chandler, et al.). 80 in flight over Lake Hartwell SP, Oconee Co, SC, 16 Feb (Brooks Garrett) was a notable count.



*Sandhill Cranes
2 February 2018
Carteret Co, NC
Photo by Martin
Wall*

Black-bellied Plover: One on the mudflats in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Dec (Matt Spangler) and 4 Dec (Mark Kosiewski) was late for a site so far inland.

Long-billed Curlew: Two were seen around Raccoon Key, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Dec (John Cox, et al.) and 25 Feb (Caroline Eastman, et al.).

Hudsonian Godwit: One seen and photographed amongst Marbled Godwits at North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Dec (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock) was quite late.

Ruff: A female (Reeve) was seen and photographed in a marsh along US-17 near the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 19-24 Feb (Roger Smith, m. obs.).

Long-billed Dowitcher: 825 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 30 Dec (Steve Calver) was a notable count.

American Woodcock: Several birders noted concentrations of woodcocks at coastal sites during a period of abnormal cold and snow in early January. Those sightings included 46+ around Oriental, Pamlico Co, NC, 6 Jan (Greg Perry); 22 video-recorded in a yard in Point Harbor, Currituck Co, NC, 6 Jan (*fide* Jeff Lewis); 15 at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 7 Jan (John Fussell, et al.); and 10 along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 7 Jan (Lewis).

Solitary Sandpiper: One photographed in Georgetown, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Dec (Ritch Lilly) was late.

Red Phalarope: Sightings made from shore included one off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 14 Jan (Bruce Young, et al.); one photographed off Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 16 Jan (Ritch Lilly); and two off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 27 Jan (Ricky Davis).

Great Skua: Remarkably, this species was seen on all seven pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, this winter, with one 29 Dec, three 27 Jan, two 3 Feb, two 10 Feb, one 18 Feb, one 19 Feb, and two 24 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Pomarine Jaeger: One seen and photographed from the ocean overlook at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 2 Dec (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper) was a good sighting from shore.

Parasitic Jaeger: Six in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 17 Dec (Mike Tove, et al.) was the highest total ever made on that count. Six off the Coquina rock outcrop at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 2 Dec (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper) was a good total made from shore.

Dovekie: One around Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 8 Feb (Jamie Adams) and 14 Feb (Sam Cooper) was a good find for a site south of the Outer Banks. 25 on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 3 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.) was the high count during the alcid irruption this winter.

Common Murre: 13 on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese, Dare Co, NC, 10 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.) provided a new record high count of the species in NC. Common Murres were also seen on two pelagic trips out of Hatteras, albeit in smaller numbers, with four on 18 Feb and three on 19 Feb (Patteson, et al.)

Thick-billed Murre: Three were seen from shore this winter—individuals off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 21 Jan (Ricky Davis); at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21-22 Jan (Sherry Lane, m. obs.); and around the Kure Beach Pier, New Hanover Co, 11 Feb (Robert Snowden). On pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, one was seen 10 Feb, two were seen 18 Feb, and one was seen 19 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Razorbill: There was a large movement of alcids off the NC coast in late January through mid-February, including a notable count of 12,000 Razorbills in flight off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 30 Jan (Brian Patteson).

Atlantic Puffin: This alcid was seen on all six pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, in late January through February, with 15 on 27 Jan, five on 3 Feb, 17 on 10 Feb, three on 18 Feb, four on 19 Feb, and one on 24 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Black-legged Kittiwake: Sightings made on pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, were five immature birds on 27 Jan, one immature bird on 3 Feb, five immature birds on 10 Feb, and one adult on 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.). An immature bird in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 17 Feb (Jamie Adams, m. obs.) was the only one reported from shore this winter.



Black-legged Kittiwake
17 February 2018
New Hanover Co, NC
Photo by Sam Cooper

Black-headed Gull: An adult at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 8 Jan intermittently through 27 Feb (Jamie Adams, m. obs.) was the only one reported this winter.

Little Gull: This species put on a good showing on pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, in February, with two on 3 Feb, four on 10 Feb, one on 18 Feb, and three on 24 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.). An adult photographed at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 17 Feb (Patteson) and an immature bird photographed in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 18 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.) were the only ones reported from shore.

Laughing Gull: An adult at Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 25 Dec (Harry LeGrand) was unusual for a site in the Piedmont during the winter.

Ring-billed Gull: Unusual for the northern mountains in winter were four in West Jefferson, Ashe Co, NC, 8 Dec (Guy McGrane) and six in Boone, Watauga Co, NC, 8 Dec (Steve Dowlan).

Iceland Gull: This gull was well-reported again this winter. Sightings included two first-winter birds at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 3-10 Dec (Nathan Gatto, m. obs.); one first-winter bird at Cape Point 13 Jan into March (Jamie Adams, m. obs.); one first-winter bird at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 28 Dec through 21 Jan (Sam Jolly, m. obs.); two on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 Dec (Brian Patteson, et al.); one second-winter bird at Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 3 Jan (Lucas Bobay); an adult photographed on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 6 Jan (Jeff Lemons, et al.); an adult on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, 27 Jan (Brian Patteson, et al.); and a first-winter bird on Waites Island, Horry Co, SC, 6 Feb (Chris Hill, et al.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 112 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 9 Feb (Ricky Davis) and 39 at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 25 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra) were notable counts for those sites away from the coast. Individuals photographed on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 7 Jan (Jeff Lemons, et al.) and along Milliken Rd in Spartanburg Co, SC, 22 Jan (Gary Harbour, Michael Robertson) were great finds for those sites in the western half of the Carolinas.

Glaucous Gull: Sightings included an immature bird in Williston, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Jan (Kathy Calvert); a first-winter bird at the Horry County Landfill (limited access), Horry Co, SC, 23-24 Jan (Chris Hill, m. obs.); an immature bird at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 24 Jan (Brian Patteson) and 25 Feb (John Haire); an adult photographed at Cape Point, 28 Jan (Lucas Bobay, Ed Corey); and a second-winter bird on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 24 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Black-backed Gull: Farthest inland this winter was an adult at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 9 Feb (Ricky Davis).

Red-billed Tropicbird: One of the most surprising sightings this winter was that of an adult Red-billed Tropicbird photographed flying south off the end of Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 9 Feb (David & Susan Disher, Marbry Hopkins). This sighting was the first ever made of this species in the Carolinas during the winter period.

Red-throated Loon: Inland, individuals were seen on Lake Hartwell, Anderson Co, SC, 14-19 Dec (Scott Davis, m. obs.); on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 7 Jan (Jeff Lemons, et al.); and on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 Feb (David Anderson, et al.).

Pacific Loon: Only one was reported this winter—an individual around Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 22-27 Jan (Jamie Adams, m. obs.).

Northern Fulmar: This species was seen on all six pelagic trips in Dare Co, NC, in late January and in February, with a high count of 36 on 24 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Black-capped Petrel: Rarely seen in winter, two were seen on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese, Dare Co, NC, 10 Feb, and one was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Sooty Shearwater: Unusual for winter was one photographed over the ocean from Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 2 Feb (Nathan Gatto, et al.) and two seen on a pelagic trip out of Wanchese, Dare Co, NC, 10 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Shearwater: Pelagic trips out of Hatters, Dare Co, NC, found one 27 Jan, two 3 Feb, and one 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Cormorant: Sightings included up to five at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, throughout the winter (m. obs.); three at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 14 Dec (Gilbert Grant); and up to two at Beaufort Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 17 Dec into spring (m. obs.).

Anhinga: Three lingered in Greenville, Pitt Co, NC, until its CBC, 2 Jan (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis), north of the species' typical winter range.

American White Pelican: A few of the higher counts this winter were 242 at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 14 Dec (David Perry); 227 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 14 Dec (Steve Calver); 83 at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Dec (Ritch Lilly); 120 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Jan (Patrick Markham); and a total of 75 at two sites near Davis, Carteret Co, NC, 20 Jan (Martin Wall). Six in Barnwell Co, SC, during the Savannah River Site CBC, 14 Dec (Peter Stangel) were new to that count.

Brown Pelican: One photographed at Robinwood Lake in Gaston Co, NC, during the Gastonia CBC, 16 Dec (Christy Hill, David Schroder, Steve Tracy) was a great find for a site so far from the coast.

Least Bittern: One seen and photographed at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 22 Dec through 14 Jan (David Youngblood, m. obs.) was unusual for winter.

Reddish Egret: One seen along the Pitt St Causeway in Charleston Co, SC, 11-24 Feb (Takayuki Uchida, m. obs.) was unusual for winter.

Green Heron: One in Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC, during its CBC, 16 Dec (Lee Adams, Peggy Eubank) was unusual for a site so far north in winter.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: One at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, during its CBC, 23 Dec (Mae Howell, David Williams) was locally unusual.

Roseate Spoonbill: 27 in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover) was a notable count for winter and record number for that count.

Swallow-tailed Kite: One photographed over South Pond, Pea Island NWR, 24 Feb (Morgan Wilson) was quite early.

Swainson's Hawk: This species was seen at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, again this winter, with a light-morph immature bird seen 30 Dec (Audrey Whitlock, et al.) through 5 Feb (Jim Gould) and a light-morph adult bird seen 19 Jan (Guy McGrane, et al.) through 4 Feb (Jeff Lemons).

Red-tailed Hawk: A leucistic individual was seen by many at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 16 Dec (Cindy Hamilton) through 10 Mar (Kevin Hudson).

Rough-legged Hawk: A light-morph immature bird was seen and photographed by many at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 2 Jan (Jamie Adams) through 3 Mar (Alan MacEachren).

Golden Eagle: Sightings included an immature bird at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, during its CBC, 30 Dec (Jennifer Daggy, et al.); an immature bird at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 13 Jan (Frank Lawkins) and 2 Feb (Ritch Lilly); a second-year bird photographed along Cheek Mountain Rd in Alleghany Co, NC, 21 Jan (Jesse Anderson, et al.); an adult over Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15 Jan and 10 Feb (David Gardner, et al.); and an adult seen and photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11-17 Feb (Rich DeMidio, m. obs.).

Snowy Owl: A minor irruption occurred this winter, with seven sightings made. One found at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 4 Dec, was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator but later died (*fide* Carolina Raptor Center). Individuals found in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 12 Dec (*fide* Ritch Lilly) and at Piedmont Triad International Airport, Guilford Co, NC, in mid-December (*fide* Elizabeth Link) were collected by wildlife rehabilitators, treated and later released. One was seen around Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 15-17 Dec (Nathan & Sarah Gatto, m. obs.), 9 Jan (Becky Harrison, et al.), and 9 Feb (Karen Lebing). Because of the length of time between those sightings, it's likely the sightings represented three different individuals. One photographed at Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 6 Jan (Julian Wilson) was not seen thereafter. All sightings made in SC are pending review by the SC BRC.

Short-eared Owl: One seen along Riverside Circle in Rockingham Co, NC, 1 Jan (Martin Wall) was a first for that county. Four on Marsh Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 3 Feb (Jack Rogers) was a notable count.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: 3+ were heard at North River Game Land in Currituck Co, NC, 16 Jan (Nick Flanders), near the northeast limit of the species' range.

Vermilion Flycatcher: Two were seen and photographed in SC this winter—a female in Georgetown, Georgetown Co, 23 Nov through 2 Jan (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.) and a male at Bookhart Farm in Orangeburg Co, 6 Dec through 2 Jan (Harold Donnelly, m. obs.).

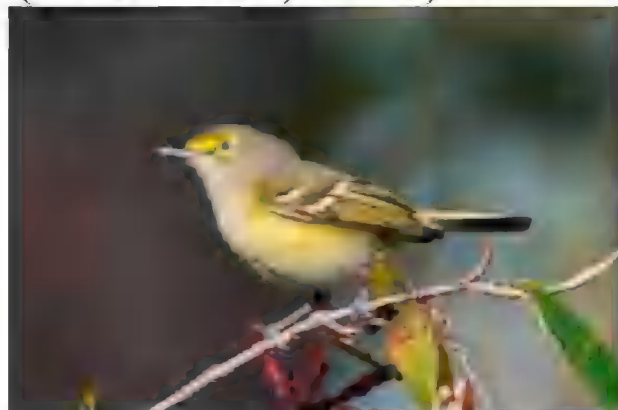
Ash-throated Flycatcher: Individuals were seen on the west side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, during the Pettigrew SP CBC, 27 Dec (Al Hooks, Guy McGrane) and at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 30 Dec (Steve Calver, et al.).

Western Kingbird: Individuals were seen at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 3 Dec (Carol Reigle, et al.) and 31 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff, et al.); in Oak Island, Brunswick Co, NC, during the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands CBC, 31 Dec (Matt Janson, Taylor Piephoff); and on Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 2-10 Jan (David Gardner, m. obs.).

Western Kingbird
3 December 2017
Carteret Co, NC
Photo by Martin Wall



White-eyed Vireo: Six along Little Deep Creek Rd in the Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Dec (John Fussell), with four remaining at that site 23 Feb (Fussell), was a good count for that area in winter. One photographed at the Walnut Creek Wetland Center, Wake Co, NC, 16 Dec (Edward Landi, et al.) was unusual for the Piedmont in winter.



White-eyed Vireo
7 February 2018
Carteret Co, NC
Photo by Martin Wall

Warbling Vireo: One seen along Pine Grove Lane in Point Harbor, Currituck Co, NC, 13 Dec (Steve Ritt) was incredibly late. There is only one accepted winter report of this species in the Carolinas, one on Roanoke Island during the winter of 2001-2002.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 10 Dec (Harry LeGrand, Eddie Owens) was quite late.

Gray Catbird: One at Brookshire Park, Watauga Co, NC, 2 Dec (Guy McGrane, et al.) was late for a site in the mountains.

Snow Bunting: Sightings continued around the jetty on the south side of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, from 18 Nov to 17 Dec, with five seen 10 Dec (Jeff Beane, et al.).

Bachman's Sparrow: Counts of five at two sites in Croatan NF in Carteret Co, NC—along Millis Rd, 4 Feb (Martin Wall, et al.) and along Pringle Rd, 10 Feb (John Fussell)—were good for winter. Fussell notes that both sites had controlled burns the previous year.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Sightings, interestingly all made in Carteret Co, NC, this winter, were of two at North River Preserve (limited access), 3 Dec (John Fussell, et al.); one at North River Preserve 10 Dec (Martin Wall, et al.) and 31 Dec (Fussell, et al.); one at North River Golf Club, 14 Dec through 29 Jan (Fussell, m. obs.); and two at North River Golf Club, 29 Jan (Wall).

Vesper Sparrow: 15 at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 15 Feb (David Gardner, et al.) was a good count.

Lark Sparrow: Two were found at Archie Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, during the Winston-Salem CBC, 16 Dec (Nathan Gatto, et al.), with one continuing at that site through 15 Mar (m. obs.). One visited a feeder in Camden Co, NC, where photographed, 22 Feb into spring (James Harrison).

Henslow's Sparrow: One photographed in Croatan NF in Craven Co, NC, 5 Jan (Andrew Sodergren) was a good find for NC in winter.

LeConte's Sparrow: Two near the visitor center at Mackay Island NWR, Currituck Co, NC, 22 Dec (Eric Alton, Tamara Conklin) were unusual for the northeast corner of the Carolinas.

Lincoln's Sparrow: About a dozen were found across the Carolinas this winter. Three in a large industrial clear-cut with grass cover in Carteret Co, NC, 10 Dec (John Fussell, et al.) was a notable concentration.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Eight were reported in the Carolinas this winter, farthest inland were individuals visiting feeders in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 13-23 Dec (Taylor Piephoff) and in Spartanburg Co, SC, 30 Dec through 17 Feb (Susan Illner).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Individuals were seen at a feeder in Pitt Co, NC, 4 Jan (Susan Bowen Moore); at a feeder in Chocowinity, Beaufort Co, NC, where photographed, 5 Jan (Ami Flowers Staples); in a yard in Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Jan (Becky Brown); in Hobucken, Pamlico Co, NC, 10 Jan (Sheryl McNair, Christine Stoughton-Root); and along Baldwin Elkins Rd in Bladen Co, NC, where photographed, 26 Jan (Amy Padgett).

Bobolink: One photographed at Kinloch Plantation (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 14 Dec (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was a truly amazing find, as there's only one previous winter record of the species in the Carolinas.

Bullock's Oriole: Two were seen in the Carolinas this winter—a first-year male visiting a feeder in Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 19 Jan through 31 Mar (Carole Outwater, m. obs.) and an adult female visiting a feeder in Mt Pleasant, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Jan through 29 Mar (Dennis Forsythe, m. obs.), banded 9 Feb (Aaron Given).

Brewer's Blackbird: For a third winter in a row, this species was found in a horse pasture along Gum Swamp Rd in Hyde Co, NC, 29 Dec (John Fussell) through 20 Feb (Ron Clark), with a high count of ten at the site, 8 Feb (Jeff Lewis).

Tennessee Warbler: One seen and photographed along the Pitt St Causeway in Charleston Co, SC, 26-28 Jan (Elizabeth Anderegg, m. obs.) was noteworthy, as there are only five previous winter records for the Carolinas.

Nashville Warbler: One was seen in Oak Island, Brunswick Co, NC, during the Southport- Bald Head- Oak Islands CBC, 31 Dec (Matt Janson, Taylor Piephoff) and 1 Jan, when photographed (Jamie Adams).

American Redstart: Lingering into winter were individuals at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 10 Dec (John Fussell, et al.); in Gaston Co, NC, during the Gastonia CBC, 16 Dec (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders); and at Samworth WMA, Georgetown Co, SC, during the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC, 29 Dec (Irvin Pitts, Shawn Smolen-Morton)

Cape May Warbler: A male individual visited a suet feeder in Salisbury, Rowan Co, NC, where photographed, 24 Jan through 20 Feb (Steve Coggin).

Northern Parula: Lingering individuals were seen in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover) and on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, during the Kitty Hawk CBC, 16 Dec (Jeff Lewis).

Magnolia Warbler: One photographed in a yard in Charleston Co, SC, 8 Jan (Arch McCallum) was a great find as there are only three previous winter records in the Carolinas.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: A male individual in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 2 Dec (Dick & Dorothy Rosche) was late to depart.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: 200 in central Halifax Co, NC, 28 Feb (Frank Enders) was a notable count for a site away from the coast.

Yellow-throated Warbler: Farthest inland this winter were individuals visiting feeders in Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, mid-December through 24 Jan (Tom Driscoll) and near Irmo, Lexington Co, SC, 5-10 Jan (Jerry Griggs).

Prairie Warbler: About a dozen were seen in the Carolinas this winter, all at sites along the coast. The northernmost was one at Mackay Island NWR, Currituck Co, NC, 10 Dec (Eric Alton, m. obs.) and two on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, during its CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Peter Vankevich).

Wilson's Warbler: Five were reported in the Carolinas this winter—an adult male in Point Harbor, Currituck Co, NC, 13 Dec (Steve Ritt); a female in a yard in Mt Pleasant, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Dec (John Cox); a male in Mt Pleasant, 28 Dec (Cox); a moribund individual in Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Dec (Dave Lovett); and one photographed in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 7 Jan (Jamie Adams).

Summer Tanager: A female wintered around a yard in Brunswick Co, NC, for the fourth year in a row, 28 Dec into spring (Greg Massey). A female was seen near Merritt, Pamlico Co, NC, 15 Dec (Christine Stoughton-Root). An adult male was photographed at a feeder in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Hilton Head Island CBC, 15 Dec (*fide* Susan Murphy).

Western Tanager: This vagrant was very well-reported this winter. Sightings included up to two, an adult male and a bright-morph female, visiting a feeder in Charleston Co, SC, 30 Dec into March (Lacy & Russell Johnson, m. obs.); an adult male visiting a feeder on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 3-30 Jan (Jennifer Tyrell, m. obs.); an adult male at Old Santee Canal Park, Berkley Co, SC, 5-17 Jan (Brad Sale, m. obs.); an adult male visiting a feeder in Scotts Hill, Pender Co, NC, 6-20 Jan (m. obs.); an adult male visiting a feeder in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 16 Jan (Bruce Smithson); a gray-morph female at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Jan (John Cox); a gray-morph female visiting a feeder on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 Feb (Shannon Howard); and an adult male visiting a feeder in Stedman, Cumberland Co, NC, 19-24 Feb (Ann Horne, m. obs.).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Very unusual for winter was an adult male seen and photographed at a feeder in Cedar Mountain, Transylvania

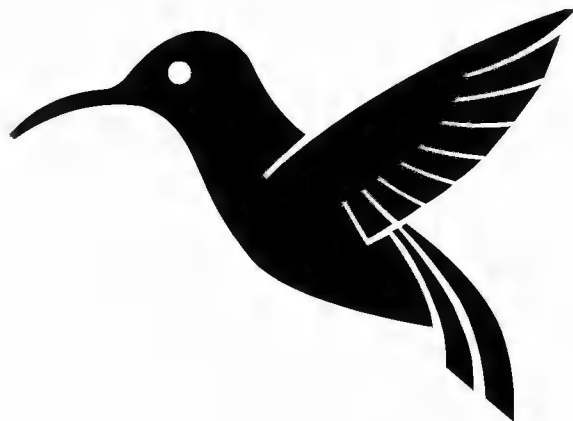
Co, NC, late December through 15 Jan (Gail Wilcox) and an immature male photographed at a feeder in Gloucester, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Jan (Barbara Pigott).

Indigo Bunting: A male visiting a millet feeder in Meggett, Charleston Co, SC, where photographed, 13-16 Feb (Cherrie Sneed) must have been over-wintering in the area, as it was too early for a returning spring migrant.

Painted Bunting: 10+ in a yard in Straits, Carteret Co, NC, in February (Carolyn & Don Hoss) was a good count for a site so far north in winter. An adult male photographed at a feeder in Greenville, Pitt Co, NC, 6 Jan (Jerry Lotterhos) was locally unusual.

Dickcissel: A first-winter female was seen and photographed visiting a feeder at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 30 Dec into spring (Scott Hartley, m. obs.).

Corrigenda: The Anna's Hummingbird that was banded in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 16 Jan 2017, was first discovered in that yard the previous day, 15 Jan 2017, not 21 Dec 2016 as stated in the Winter 2017-18 "Briefs for the Files."



CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues>. Make change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile>. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit.....	\$30.00
Family.....	\$35.00
Student.....	\$15.00
Sustaining and businesses.....	\$30.00
Patron.....	\$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive \$100 installments)	\$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member).....	\$100.00

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The Chat

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South Carolina

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Briefs for the Files

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2017 Annual Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee

**Aaron Given¹, Chair, Giff Beaton, Jeff Click, Lex Glover,
Simon Harvey, Chris Hill, Keith McCullough, William Post,
Steve Wagner**

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In 2017, the South Carolina Bird Records Committee acted on 27 new reports, of which 26 were accepted and one sent out for outside review. Two additional reports were submitted but were not voted on by the Committee. One was a report of a coastal Magnificent Frigatebird, which is only a review species in the inland parts of the state. The other was a bird that was originally misidentified.

The accepted records detailed below add five species to South Carolina's Main List: Great Kiskadee, Black-whiskered Vireo, White-faced Ibis, South Polar Skua (replacing Skua sp.), and American Flamingo. Thayer's Gull was removed from the Main List after the American Ornithological Society determined that it was a subspecies of Iceland Gull (Chesser et al. 2017). The Main List now includes 437 species.

The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was very active, and Hurricane Irma, in particular, had a temporary effect in bird distribution in the southeastern U.S. Irma made its way west across the Caribbean, turned north after hitting Cuba, and made its U.S. landfall in Florida on 10 September. It proceeded to skirt the west coast of Florida before heading up through Georgia. In the days following the passage of Irma, several individuals including two Brown Boobies, two Brown Noddies, and an American Flamingo were reported in South Carolina.

The annual meeting of the SCBRC was held on 15 April 2017 at Santee National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting was attended by Jeff Click, Aaron Given, Lex Glover, Chris Hill, and Steve Wagner. Chris Hill stepped down as the committee Chair, and the committee elected Aaron Given as the new Chair. Lex Glover was elected Secretary, and Jeff Click and Chris Hill were elected to the Nomination Committee.

The Committee agreed to remove Eurasian Wigeon (coastal only) and Western Tanager from the review list. Both species are becoming nearly annual in South Carolina, and sometimes with multiple individuals.

Because eBird has become so widely used and available to everyone, many good records reported there are not being reported to the Committee. To alleviate the amount of time it takes for an observer to file an additional report to the Committee, the Committee discussed creating a potential "auto-accept" policy of eBirded reports of certain species. These

reports would not have to be voted on by the committee but would become part of the official records. Reports that would qualify for this “auto-accept” policy would be species that regularly occur in the state and/or species that are easily identified via a photograph or recording with no issue of provenance. The committee will continue to discuss this idea over the next year and determine if this policy would be beneficial in maintaining the official records of South Carolina. Other state records committees have adopted similar policies (Garvey and Iliff 2013).

Accepted Reports

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*). 2017-001. Chris Hill submitted a report with two photographs, on behalf of the observer, of a King Eider that was harvested on 24 November 2015 in the ocean off Georgetown (Georgetown Co.) The report was accepted unanimously. Although this is only the 2nd record that has come through the committee, according to eBird there may be as many as three additional reports; all from Huntington Beach State Park in January/February (1990, 1996, 2014).

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*). 2017-019. Felicia Sanders submitted a report accompanied by one photograph and one short video clip of an American Flamingo at Santee Coastal Reserve (Murphy Island; Charleston Co.) from 9-10 October 2017. This record was accepted by a vote of 7-1 (QO). Questions of origin are always a concern with a flamingo report outside of Florida. The video showed that the bird was not banded and had bright pink plumage. For most committee members, the issue of provenance was satisfied based on these features. This is a first record for South Carolina, and because of photographic evidence, it will be moved from the Hypothetical List to the Definitive List.

Potentially in conjunction with this report, on 11 September 2017, an American Flamingo was reported flying south along the beach at Myrtle Beach State Park (see 2017-018 in Unresolved reports). The following day on 12 September 2017, a boater took a blurry photo of an apparent American Flamingo in the tidal marsh near Tibwin Creek about 53 miles south of Myrtle Beach. Despite several attempts to relocate this bird, it was not relocated. This sighting did not result in a vote by the BRC, although this may be reconsidered. Then on 9 October 2017, staff at SCDNR got photographs and video of an American Flamingo on Murphy Island (Santee Coastal Reserve) which is only approximately 12 miles north of the Tibwin Creek sighting location. The bird was relocated at the same location the following day. It is possible that all these sightings represent the same individual that may have been displaced from the Florida population (?) by Hurricane Irma.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*). 2017-005. Barb Hennessy submitted a written report along with two photos of a Limpkin at Lake Robinson in

Taylors (Greenville Co.) on 2 May 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*). 2017-006. Ann Wilson submitted a written report along with two photos of a Limpkin at Santee State Park (Orangeburg Co.) on 12 May 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*). 2017-009. Jonas Younts submitted a written report accompanied by two photos of Limpkin at Lake Greenwood in Waterloo (Laurens Co.) on 3 July 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*). 2017-010. Mark Johnson submitted a written report along with one photo of a Limpkin at Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge (Georgetown Co.) on 8 July 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

South Polar Skua (*Stercorarius maccormicki*). 2017-012. Dan Vickers submitted a written report with multiple photos of a South Polar Skua seen on a pelagic trip on 22 June 2012. The geographical coordinates provided in the report confirmed that the bird was observed in South Carolina waters based on “closest point of land”. The report was accepted unanimously. This represents the first record for South Carolina, and because of photographic evidence, it will be moved from the Hypothetical List to the Definitive List. At least four other eBird reports exist for this species in the waters off South Carolina.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*). 2017-026. Aaron Given submitted a written report along with 10 photographs, on behalf of the observer, of a Long-tailed Jaeger from Shipyard Beach in Hilton Head (Beaufort Co.) on 8 October 2017. The bird was found near the shoreline by some children playing on the beach. They moved the bird to a surfboard on the dunes. The bird was taken to a certified rehabber associated with the Center for Birds of Prey in St. Helena to examine. The bird presented with an open fracture of the left radius and ulna. The bird was euthanized in St. Helena while in communication with Center for Birds of Prey medical staff. The bird was kept in refrigeration until it was transported to the Center on 18 October 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*). 2017-016. Chris Hill submitted a report of a Brown Noddy, on behalf of the observer, and based on three photographs that he received from the Center for Birds of Prey in Awendaw. The bird was observed sitting on a beach walkover at the Isle of the Palms (Charleston Co.) on 12 September 2017, one day following the passing of Hurricane Irma. The bird appeared to be injured or exhausted but flew to the water after being approached by a dog. The report was accepted unanimously.

Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*). 2017-017. Chris Hill submitted a report and two photographs, on behalf of the observers (Amanda and Paul Laurent), of a Brown Noddy at Huntington Beach State Park (Georgetown Co.) on 12 September 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*). 2017-002. Larry Gates submitted a written report of a Pacific Loon observed in the ocean off Litchfield Beach (Georgetown) on 29 December 2016. The report was accepted unanimously. This represents the 5th record for South Carolina.

Cory's Shearwater (Scopoli's) (*Calonectris diomedea diomedea*). 2017-013. The British Ornithologists' Union split Cory's Shearwater into three species (Sangster et al. 2012), including two that likely occur in South Carolina: Cory's Shearwater (*C.d. borealis*) and Scopoli's Shearwater (*C.d. diomedea*). The Committee feels that it is important to track records of Scopoli's to not only help determine occurrence but to document them for the record should the American Ornithological Society ever decide to split them.

Dan Vickers submitted a written report accompanied by one photograph of a Cory's Shearwater (Scopoli's) from a pelagic trip on 22 June 2012. The geographical coordinates provided in the report confirmed that the bird was observed in South Carolina waters based on "closest point of land". The report was accepted unanimously.

Sooty Shearwater (*Ardenna grisea*). 2017-014. Dan Vickers submitted a written report accompanied by 4 photographs of a Sooty Shearwater from a pelagic trip on 22 June 2012. The geographical coordinates provided in the report confirmed that the bird was observed in South Carolina waters based on "closest point of land". The report was accepted unanimously.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*). 2017-020. Scott Hartley submitted a written report with two photographs of a Brown Booby from Myrtle Beach State Park (Horry Co.) on 12 September 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*). 2017-027. Aaron Given submitted a written report accompanied by 3 photographs, on behalf of the observer, of a Brown Booby from Bluffton (Beaufort Co.) on 14 September 2017. This bird was found in the backyard of a house in Bluffton. The homeowner said the bird kept colliding with the fence causing minor abrasions to the head. Melissa Davis, mammal rehabber on Daufuskie Island, captured the bird and contacted the Center for Birds of Prey in Awendaw, SC. The bird was transported to the Center on the following day. The bird appeared to be healthy and no signs of injury according to the Center. The bird was transferred to the Marine Science Center in Ponce Inlet Florida on 6 October 2017. The bird was planned for release via a pelagic boat to a Brown Booby colony in South Florida. The report was accepted unanimously.

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*). 2017-011. Steve Patterson submitted a written report accompanied by three photographs and one video of a White-faced Ibis at Springdale Racetrack in Camden (Kershaw Co.) on 24 June 2017. The report was accepted unanimously. This represents the first record for South Carolina, and because of photographic evidence, it will

be placed on the Definitive List. There are three eBird reports of a White-faced Ibis from Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (Jasper Co.) that had been reportedly seen by multiple observers spanning the dates of 10 November 2000 and 18 February 2001. There are no photographs or descriptions associated with any of the eBird reports.

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*). 2017-024. Aaron Given submitted a written report along with 4 photographs, on behalf of the observer, of a Snowy Owl from Myrtle Beach (Horry Co.) on 12 December 2017. The bird was photographed eating a pigeon and posted on Facebook. The bird reportedly allowed close approach and people feared the bird was injured, so the Center for Birds of Prey captured the bird the same day and took it back to the Center for treatment. The Center reported that the bird was malnourished and had a heavy parasite load. On 22 December 2017, after treatment and care the bird was transferred to Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research in Newark, Delaware. The bird will be banded and released via coordinators from the Project Snow Storm. The report was accepted unanimously.

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*). 2017-021. Chris Hill and Lois Stacey submitted written reports along with several photographs of a female Vermilion Flycatcher at a planned development site (Craven's Grant) in Georgetown (Georgetown Co.). The bird was extremely cooperative and was enjoyed by dozens of birders from 23 November 2017 to 2 January 2018. The report was accepted unanimously.

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*). 2017-022. Harold Donnelly submitted a written report along with 4 photographs of a male Vermilion Flycatcher from private property in Orangeburg Co from 6 December 2017 to 2 January 2018. The report was accepted unanimously.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*). 2017-025. Steve Calver submitted a written report accompanied with 7 photographs of an Ash-throated Flycatcher from the Savannah Spoil Area (Jasper Co.) on 30 December 2017. The report was accepted unanimously.

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*). 2017-004. Steve Patterson and Ed Blich each submitted a written report accompanied by five photos from Ed Blich, Dennis Forsythe, and Kelly Luikey of a Great Kiskadee observed at Bear Island Wildlife Management Area in Green Pond (Colleton Co.) from 9 February 2017 to 26 March 2017. The bird was originally reported by Kelly Luikey on 9 February 2017 and over the next several weeks, the bird was seen by countless numbers of birders from all over the Carolinas and Georgia. The report was accepted unanimously. This represents the first record for South Carolina and because of photographic evidence, it will be placed on the Definitive List.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*). 2017-007. Imtiaz Haque submitted a written report and 1 photograph of a Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Dobbins Farm in Townville (Anderson Co.) on 21 May 2017. The observer provided a nice photograph alongside an Eastern Kingbird sitting on a barb-wired fence. The report was accepted unanimously. This

represents the 2nd record for South Carolina. There is an additional report on eBird from 1 November 1973 at Bulls Island (Charleston Co.) but has no information other than date and location.

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*). 2017-008. Irvin Pitts and David McLean submitted a written report along with four photographs and an audio recording of a Black-whiskered Vireo at Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge (Bulls Island; Charleston Co.) on 13 June 2017. The record was accepted unanimously. This represents the first record for South Carolina, and because of photographic evidence it will be placed on the Definitive List.

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). 2017-003. Two written reports submitted by Jeff Click and Paul Serridge accompanied by two photos by David Booth of a Wood Thrush observed at Santee Coastal Reserve in McClellanville (Charleston Co.) on 12 February 2017. The bird was seen by many individuals from the Greenville County Bird Club as part of their Coastal South Carolina outing. The report was accepted unanimously. This appears to be the 1st winter record of Wood Thrush in South Carolina.

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). 2017-023. Craig Watson submitted a written report accompanied by 4 photographs of a Bobolink seen during the Winyah Bay Christmas Bird Count at a private plantation in Georgetown County on 14 December 2017. The report was accepted unanimously and represents the first winter record of Bobolink in South Carolina.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Setophaga kirtlandii*). 2017-015. Steve Patterson submitted a written report of a Kirtland's Warbler seen in Camden (Kershaw Co.) on 17 October 2016. The report was accepted unanimously.

Unresolved

Certain split votes, according to committee bylaws, require the soliciting of input from outside reviewers, followed by a re-vote by the committee. The following report awaits outside review.

American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*). 2017-018. A written report was submitted of an American Flamingo from Myrtle Beach State Park (Horry Co.) on 11 September 2017. This record received six votes to accept and two votes to not accept (1 ID, 1 QO). The report will be sent out for outside review and the committee will revote on the record.

Acknowledgements

The Committee thanks all the observers who submitted reports, and those who encouraged others to submit reports. Your actions increase our understanding of bird occurrence in South Carolina.

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Limpkin
2 May 2017
Lake Robinson, SC (Greenville County)
Photo by Barb Hennessy

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) Breeds at Wallace, Marlboro County, South Carolina

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The Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) is not listed on the American Ornithologists' Union checklist because it is not recognized as having occurred naturally anywhere in North America (American Ornithological Society 2018) nor is it listed on the official list of the birds of South Carolina which does recognize non-established, exotic species (Carolina Bird Club 2018a). Thus, it is of interest to document a pair of Black Swans that nested at Wallace, Marlboro County in 2013.

I observed one pair with three downy cygnets (ca. 5-days old) in a pasture (1.13-ha) that enclosed a small farm pond (0.68-ha) located between Maston Lane and SC secondary road SR-35-262 (Delta Height Road) on 31 March 2013. This site was located behind the Linton residence along U.S Hwy 1. The five birds were also present on 14 April 2013. On both dates the birds (adults had unclipped wings) were observed in the pasture and on the pond.

The pair was originally purchased at Rock Hill, South Carolina in May 2011 when both birds were two years old; they were originally from Ohio and Pennsylvania, respectively (D. Linton, pers. comm.). The pair raised three broods through September 2014. In one nesting attempt, only one egg of a clutch of four hatched, although the cygnet survived. The pair always built their large nest along the margin of the farm pond. A low fence that enclosed the pasture provided some protection from terrestrial predators. The female and one cygnet were sold in September 2014, and later that year the male was accidentally killed.

Although free-flying, the adult swans rarely left the farm pond and pasture and never flew further than to a marsh located ca. 100 m away (D. Linton, pers. comm.). Even then, they promptly returned to their core area. The pond, even during drought conditions, always contained some water. Black Swans prefer permanent wetlands.

In Florida, 211 species of non-established exotics have been documented, with the focus on their breeding status (Greenlaw et al. 2014). The estimated breeding population of the Black Swan in Florida from 2008-2012 was 5-24 pairs, where they have been documented since the 1980s. Although most of these birds are concentrated in central and southern regions, Black Swan has occurred in cooler regions of the state, as far north as two counties (one coastal, one in the interior) in the northern peninsula (Greenlaw et al. 2014). Black Swans have occurred in North Carolina

(Wikipedia 2018), but they are not listed as a non-established exotic species for that state (Carolina Bird Club 2018b).

In South Carolina, the Black Swans at Wallace that were introduced as ornamental birds may satisfy the definition of the Provisional II category of the South Carolina checklist, i.e., of a species whose occurrence is believed to be the result of human assistance, and which have not become established. Thus, I suggest that the Black Swan can be added to the Provisional II category of the South Carolina checklist (Carolina Bird Club 2018a). I consider it likely that non-established exotic species, including some waterfowl, have been under-recorded in warm temperate regions of southeastern North America such as South Carolina and North Carolina.

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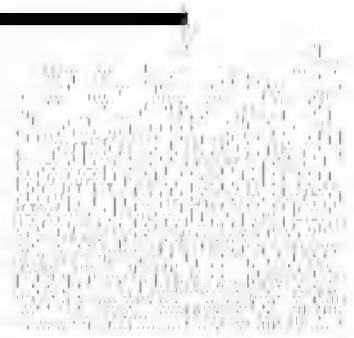
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Editor's Note: The South Carolina Bird Records Committee reviewed this Field Note prior to publication. While the committee does not feel that individual birds like the Black Swans noted here are intended to be covered by the Provisional II category, as their presence in the state is clearly due to transportation into the state with intent for aviculture or ornamentation, the committee is considering reviewing the definition of the Provisional II category to more clearly define the intention.

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Spring 2018, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **Ln** – Lane, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Outside of the species' typical range were five along Poplin Rd in Union Co, NC, 25 Apr (Jenny Swofford, m. obs.); two at McAlpine Creek Park, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 4 May (m. obs.); six at Lake Rim, Cumberland Co, NC, 18 May (Amber Williams); and six in Mills River, Henderson Co, NC, 31 May (Kevin Burke). It's likely that the two ducks at McAlpine Creek Park were originally part

of the five seen along Poplin Rd nine days earlier, considering those two sites are only nine miles apart. One could wonder if the flock of six in Henderson County was the same wandering flock of six seen 200 miles away in Cumberland County 13 days earlier.

Snow Goose: One lingered on Osceola Lake, Henderson Co, NC, until 17 Apr (Wayne Forsythe).

Greater White-fronted Goose: One at the golf course in Maggie Valley, Haywood Co, NC, 15 Apr (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, Bob Olthoff) and at nearby Lake Junaluska, 24 Apr (m. obs.) was late to depart.

Trumpeter Swan: Two photographed on Lake Betz, Wake Co, NC, during the late afternoon of 19 Apr (George Capaz, Sahas Panda) didn't stick around for long. In direct contrast, a first-winter bird on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, was seen and photographed by many over the course of two months, 5 Mar through 2 May (Peter Vankevich, m. obs.).

Northern Pintail: A seemingly healthy drake photographed on Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 28 Apr (Dave Hart) was somewhat late.

Redhead: A drake, possibly injured, lingered at the brackish pond adjacent to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, through 10 Jun (m. obs.).

Ring-necked Duck: One lingering on a small pond along US-1 in Lee Co, NC, 20 May (Jeff Beane, Stephanie Horton) was probably the same bird that lingered at that site last year.

Greater Scaup: A hen photographed on W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Wilkes Co, NC, 18 May (Guy McGrane) was late.

King Eider: A hen, probably injured, seen around Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, SC, 9 May (Jim Buxton) into summer (m. obs.) was quite unexpected for late spring.

Common Eider: A first-winter drake lingered around the rocks at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, until 10 Jun (m. obs.).

White-winged Scoter: Inland sightings, all in NC, included three on Lake Tillery in Stanly Co, 15 Mar (Jesse Anderson); one on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, 25 Mar through 2 Apr (Connie Wulkowicz, m. obs.); three on Ecusta Pond, Transylvania Co, 25 Mar (Michael Plauché, Martine Stolk); one on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, 10-26 Apr (Aaron Steed, m. obs.); and a different individual on Lake Junaluska, 27 Apr (Wulkowicz, m. obs.).

Hooded Merganser: Breeding was confirmed at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, when a hen was photographed with seven chicks, 2 Apr (Gary Harbour, et al.).

Common Merganser: Possibly attempting to breed on rivers in the NC mountains were mated pairs on the Green River in Polk Co, 18 Mar and 1 Apr (Todd Arcos) and on the French Broad River in Madison Co, 7 Mar (Sandy Melton, et al.), 12 Apr (Peter Magnin, et al.), and 27 Apr (Harry LeGrand).

Horned Grebe: 250 around the west end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Mar (Martin Wall, et al.) was a noteworthy count.

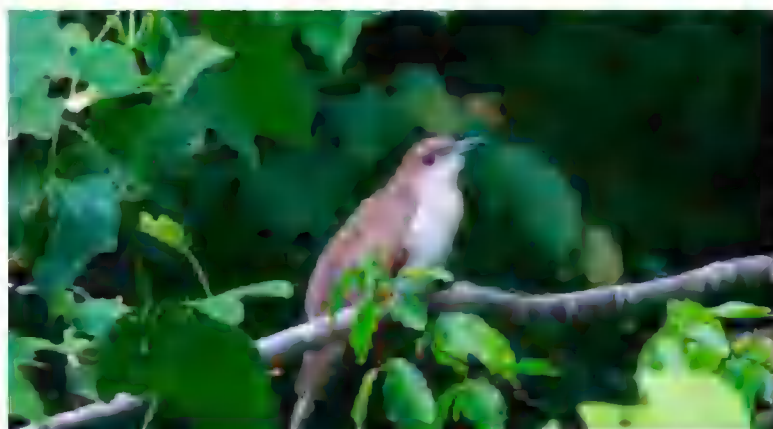
Red-necked Grebe: One on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 24 Mar through 12 Apr (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.) was a good find for an inland site and also somewhat late.

Eared Grebe: Individuals continued from winter at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, until 16 Mar (Nathan & Sarah Gatto) and on the Cape Fear River near Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, until 28 Mar (Greg Massey, m. obs.).

Common Ground-Dove: One seen in flight over the east end of Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 May (Ricky Davis) was a great find for a site in NC.

White-winged Dove: One was photographed visiting a feeder in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 14-16 May (Karen Lebing).

Black-billed Cuckoo: A pair appeared to be on territory along Tyne Rd in northwest Rockingham Co, NC, 7-29 May (Martin Wall, m. obs.), though no evidence of nesting was found.



*Black-billed Cuckoo, 20 May 2018,
Rockingham County, NC
Photo by Martin Wall*

Rufous Hummingbird: The adult female that visited a feeder near Irmo, Lexington Co, SC, for a second winter in a row, departed 1 Apr (Jerry Griggs).

Virginia Rail: One spent the majority of the spring at The Park at Flat Rock, Henderson Co, NC, 23 Mar through 21 May (Ron Selvey, m. obs.). Was this rail the same individual seen and heard at that site during the spring of 2016, that year 24 Mar through 10 May (Steve Semanchuk, m. obs.)?

Purple Gallinule: A moribund individual found in downtown Columbia, Richland Co, SC, 10 Apr (Bob Wood) was unusual for an urban area, especially one so far from the coast. One photographed at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 22 Apr (Tony Johnson) was very unusual for the mountain region, providing only the third record. One seen in a roadside drainage ditch in South Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 30 May through 12 Jun (Gerald Head, Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.) was unusual for that area.

Limpkin: Two were photographed in the Sparkleberry Swamp, the upper portion of Lake Marion in Sumter Co, SC, 1 Apr (Barry Scully). Interestingly, a Limpkin was photographed in the same area 16 Sep 2016 (Elizabeth Anderegg).

Black-necked Stilt: One found at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, after a period of heavy rain, 31 May (Wayne Forsythe, Gary Harbour, et al.) was a remarkable find. The only previous record from the mountain region was made at that same site in 2004.

Black-bellied Plover: 28 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) was a notable count for the mountain region.

American Golden-Plover: Spring sightings included one on the mudflats at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Mar (Gilbert Grant); one at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 24-30 Mar (Carl & Cathy Miller, m. obs.) and 21 Apr through 5 May (Craig Watson, m. obs.); and two at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 4 May (Steve Calver).

Piping Plover: One seen in a flooded field along Wilson Rd near Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 16 May (Michael Plauché) was a great find for the mountain region.

Upland Sandpiper: Individual migrants were seen along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, 16 Apr (Todd Arcos, m. obs.); at the Simpson Research Station, Anderson Co, SC, 17 Apr (George McHenry); and at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 28 Apr (Matt Johnson).

Whimbrel: 28 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, after a period of heavy rain, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) was an unprecedented count for the mountain region, as all previous records are of individuals!

Long-billed Curlew: Individuals were seen and photographed on Edisto Island, Colleton Co, SC, 27 Mar (Jeremy Ross); on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 31 Mar (Lisa Tucci), 2 Apr (Steve Howell), and 14 Apr (Jamie Adams); and at the Swanquarter Ferry Terminal, Hyde Co, NC, 27 Apr (Sean Leahy, Dawn Lloyd).



*Bar-tailed Godwit, 23 Apr 2018,
Carteret County, NC, Photo by Martin
Wall*

Bar-tailed Godwit: One, probably the same individual seen at the site the previous two fall seasons, was photographed on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Apr (Martin Wall). It is quite possible that the bird wintered there without being detected, as that site is only accessible by boat.

Ruddy Turnstone: 30 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, after a period of heavy rain, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) was an excellent count for the mountain region.

Red Knot: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report of eight Red Knots at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, after a period of heavy rain, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.). If accepted, this report would provide the first record of this sandpiper in the mountain region.

Ruff: One photographed at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Mar (Pam Ford, Craig Watson, m. obs.) was the only one reported this spring.

Short-billed Dowitcher: 100+ at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, after a period of heavy rain, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) provided a new record high count for the mountain region.

Solitary Sandpiper: One photographed at the Clemson University Dairy, Pickens Co, SC, 2 Mar (Kevin Kubach), after reportedly being first seen there 24 Feb (*fide* Kubach), was quite early.

Willet: Nine photographed in a flooded field along Wilson Rd near Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 16 May (Michael Plauché) was a noteworthy count for the mountain region.

Wilson's Phalarope: Two, a male and a female, both molting into breeding plumage, photographed at the Biltmore Estate, Buncombe Co, NC, 17 May (Doug

Johnston, John Koon) were likely the same two individuals seen ten miles away along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, two days later, 19 May (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.).

Red-necked Phalarope: One photographed at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 22 May (Gilbert Grant) was a good find.

South Polar Skua: Two seen over the ocean from Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Allen Bryan) was an amazing sighting, as this species is only very rarely seen from shore. Individuals were seen on three of the 18 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June, 23 May, 25 May, and 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Parasitic Jaeger: 13 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, during a period of strong easterly winds, 24 Apr (Martin Wall, et al.) was a noteworthy count from shore. One seen resting on the beach at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 19 May (Al Gamache) was a good find.

Razorbill: One photographed off the Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, 12 Apr (Martin Wall) was the last to depart.

Black-headed Gull: One photographed at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 8 Apr (Stuart Mackenzie) was probably the same bird seen in that area during the winter.

Little Gull: An adult was seen with Bonaparte's Gulls off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 10 Mar (Ricky Davis).

Laughing Gull: Sightings in the western half of NC included four on Lake Hickory in Catawba Co, 25 Apr (Dwayne Martin); one in a flooded field near Brevard, Transylvania Co, 30 May (Michael Plauché); two along the Yadkin River Greenway, Wilkes Co, 30 May (Issac Kerns, Guy McGrane); and nine along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, 30 May (Wayne Forsythe).

Franklin's Gull: One in first-summer plumage photographed in a flooded field along Wilson Rd near Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 18 May (Mike Judd, Michael Plauché) was a fantastic find for the spring period, as most sightings in the Carolinas are made during the fall. The sighting was also a first for Transylvania County.

Iceland Gull: Sightings, all along the NC coast, included one at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, 8 Mar (Sam Cooper); two, an adult and a first-winter bird, at Cape Point, Dare Co, 10 Mar (Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.); and three, an adult and two first-winter birds, at Cape Point, 11 Mar (Ned Brinkley).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 307 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 27 May (Ricky Davis) was an amazing total, especially for a site away from the coast. An adult on Lake Hickory in Catawba Co, NC, 25 Apr (Dwayne Martin) was a first for that county.

Glaucous Gull: Individuals were seen at the Horry County Landfill, Horry Co, SC, 9-12 Mar (Chirs Hill, m. obs.); at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 2-22 Apr (Corey Finger, m. obs.); and at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Apr (Sam Cooper).

Caspian Tern: 74 around Crosswinds Marina at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 22 Apr (Matt Spangler) was an excellent count for a site in the Piedmont.

Roseate Tern: After one was first found at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 18 May (Michael Gosselin), two were seen at the site 25 May (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.), and one or two continued at the site into summer. Were the two terns a mated pair, and were they attempting to nest in that area?



*Arctic Tern,
25 Apr 2018, Carteret County, NC, Photo
by Martin Wall*

Arctic Tern: One was photographed on the beach at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, following several days of strong easterly winds, 25 Apr (Martin Wall).

Forster's Tern: 13 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in Henderson Co, NC, following a period of heavy rain, 16 May (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.) was a noteworthy count for the mountain region.

White-tailed Tropicbird: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 19 May and 26 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-billed Tropicbird: Pending review by the SC BRC is the

report with photos of an apparent adult Red-billed Tropicbird seen from a boat 150 miles southeast of Charleston Co, SC, 2 May (Cindy Hamilton). An immature bird was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 26 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Trindade Petrel: Counts of two were made on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 19 May and 25 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Fea's Petrel: Individuals were seen on three of the 18 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, this spring, 1 Jun, 2 Jun, and 8 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Tahiti Petrel: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Tahiti Petrel seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). If accepted this sighting would provide the first documented record of this species in the Carolinas, the Eastern United States, and possibly the entire Atlantic Ocean!

Cory's Shearwater: 101 counted in a three-hour span from Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Allen Bryan) was a fantastic from-shore total.

Great Shearwater: One photographed over the ocean from Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Allen Bryan) was a good find from shore.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel: 12 at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Allen Bryan) was a notable count from shore.

European Storm-Petrel: One was seen and photographed on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Leach's Storm-Petrel: Following a period of strong easterly winds, one was photographed over Beaufort Inlet from Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 24 Apr (John Fussell, Martin Wall, et al.) and a moribund individual was found in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 25 Apr (Gilbert Grant). 54 tallied on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 30 May (Brian Patteson, et al.) was a noteworthy total.

Wood Stork: Individuals photographed over Manson Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 17 May (Andrew Thornton) and at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 18 May (George McHenry) were unusual for those areas so far inland.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Individuals were seen over Fripp Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 15 May (Barbara Thomas Planchon); over Radio Island, Carteret Co, NC, 19 May (Al Gamache); at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 May (Jeff Lemons); and over Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 30 May (Chris Marsh, et al.). Pairs were seen in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 22 May (Loanne Snavelly, et al.) and over Charleston Harbor, Charleston Co, SC, 29 May (Craig Watson).

Brown Booby: An immature bird seen and photographed by many at Swan Lake on the campus of Furman University, Greenville Co, SC, 26 Apr through 30 May (Melanie Gallant, m. obs.) was quite a surprise. There is only one previous record of the species at an inland site in SC. An immature bird was seen from Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 24 May (Dwayne Martin).

Great Cormorant: An adult at Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 17 Mar through 6 May (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.) was probably the same individual seen at that lake in the early winter. Also at an inland site was an immature bird seen on the SC side of the Savannah River in Edgefield Co, 30 Mar through 11 Apr (m. obs.). A total of six between Beaufort Inlet and Cape Lookout in Carteret Co, NC, 18 Mar (Martin Wall, et al.) was a notable count.



Great Cormorant, 18 Mar 2018, Carteret County, NC Photo by Martin Wall

Anhinga: Two, a female and a male, at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 9 May (Martina Nordstrand) may have been attempting to nest at that site.

American White Pelican: 20 at Auman Lake in Moore Co, NC, 12 Mar (Susan Campbell) were locally unusual. There was a relatively large congregation around the dam on High Rock Lake, border of Davidson Co and Rowan Co, in early April, with a high count of 65 made 3 Apr (Brenda Hiles).

Brown Pelican: Individuals seen over Lake Murray in Saluda Co, SC, 26 May (Kevin Kubach) and on Lake Jocassee, Oconee Co, SC, 31 May (Tricia Kyzer, et al.) were unusual for sites so far from the coast.

Snowy Egret: One along Hooper Ln, Henderson Co, NC, 18-19 May (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) was unusual for the mountain region and possibly the same individual seen at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 28-30 May (Jay Wherley, m. obs.).

Tricolored Heron: One at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 25-26 Apr (Brad Dalton, m. obs.) was a good find for a site so far from the coast.

Cattle Egret: Locally unusual were two in the eastern corner of Moore Co, NC, 12 Apr (Linda Jones); up to two around Mills River, Henderson Co, NC, 13 Apr through 27 May (Bob Butler, m. obs.); and one in a field south of Newton, Catawba Co, NC, 25

Apr (Dwayne Martin). 650 at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Marlboro Co, SC, 13 May (Mac Williams) was a remarkable count.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: An adult photographed at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 22 Apr (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz) was unusual for the mountain region and a possible first for that county.



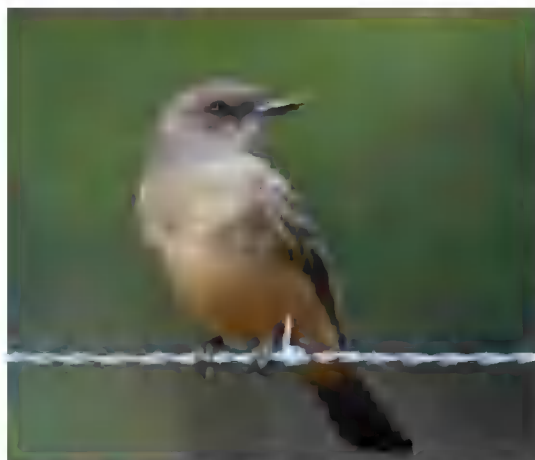
*Roseate Spoonbill, 27 May 2018,
Mecklenburg County, NC
Photo by Phil Fowler*

Roseate Spoonbill: A northward irruption began in late May that continued into summer. The first “out-of-range” sightings were of one in flight over Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 14 May (Marcia Lyons); one at the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, 23 May into June (m. obs.); one at a small pond in Davidson, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 27-28 May (m. obs.); one in flight over Nags Head, Dare Co, 29 May (Michael Todd, et al.); five at Lake Busbee, Horry Co, SC, 29 May (Chris Hill); and one in flight over Roanoke Island, Dare Co, 30 May (Jeff Lewis).

Swallow-tailed Kite: One seen in flight at two sites near Yates Millpond, Wake Co, NC, 27 Apr (Phil Doerr) and 7 May (Kevin Hudson) was unusual for that

area. Nine in the Green Swamp near Makatoka, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 May (Ricky Davis) were suggestive of possible nesting in that area.

Snail Kite: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Snail Kite, either a female or an immature bird, at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 4 Apr (Bill Anderson). If accepted, this sighting would provide the third record for SC.



*Say's Phoebe, 11 Apr 2018,
Pickens County, SC
Photo by Linda Montgomery*

Golden Eagle: An immature bird was seen in flight over the northern tip of Watauga Co, NC, 7 Mar (Merrill Lynch).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individual migrants were seen at Reynolda Gardens, Forsyth Co, NC, 7-8 May (Carol Cunningham, m. obs.); at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 9 May (Jesse Anderson, et al.); and in the Pink Beds of Pisgah NF, Transylvania Co, NC, 25 May (Aaron Steed).

Say's Phoebe: Pending review by the SC BRC was the report with photographs of an apparent Say's Phoebe at Cherry Farm near Clemson, Pickens Co, SC, 11 Apr (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.). If accepted, this sighting would become the second official record of the

species in SC and the first with photographs. A report from Richland County, Feb 2013 still pends review.

Great Kiskadee: One, almost certainly the same individual seen there Feb-Mar 2017, wintered at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, again this year. After being seen on the ACE Basin CBC, 31 Dec (John Cox, et al.), it was audio recorded after the refuge was opened to the public, 11 Feb (Kathy Woolsey), and then seen by many 18 Mar (Matt Johnson, et al.) through 16 Apr (m. obs.). All reports of this species still pend review by the SC BRC.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: A relatively short-tailed individual was photographed just east of Pendleton, Anderson Co, SC, 30 Apr (Ritch Lilly). A longer-tailed individual was photographed at the traditional summering site along Gunter Rd in Greenville Co, SC, 7 May (Anthony Martin) though not seen thereafter.



*Chestnut-collared Longspur, 17
May 2018, Dare County, NC
Photo by Jeff Lewis*

Red-eyed Vireo: One seen and heard at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 23 Mar (Ron Clark, et al.) was a little early.

Common Raven: Well east of the species' typical range were two seen over a farm in southwest Halifax Co, NC, 29 Apr, and one heard there 31 May (Merrill Lynch).

Cliff Swallow: Nesting was confirmed where I-40 crosses the Northeast Cape Fear River, border of New Hanover Co and Pender Co, NC, 29

Apr (Sam Cooper). One at the east end of Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 May (Ricky Davis) must have been a late migrant, as there are no known nesting colonies in that area.

Brown Creeper: One seen at Haw River SP in Guilford Co, NC, 18 May (Matt Wangerin, et al.) was late to depart.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent adult male Chestnut-collared Longspur at the Cape Point Campground, Dare Co, NC, 17 May (Evangelyn Buckland, Michael Gosselin, m. obs.). If accepted, this sighting would provide the fourth record for NC.



*Clay-colored Sparrow, 20 Apr 2018,
Carteret County, NC
Photo by Martin Wall*

Clay-colored Sparrow: There was a noticeable push of migrants through the Carolinas in late April. Individuals were photographed at the east end of Holden Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 20 Apr (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); visiting the feeders at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 20-21 Apr (Martin Wall, m. obs.); at the SC Botanical Gardens in Pickens Co, SC, 26-27 (Linda Montgomery, Scott Davis); in Pisgah NF in Transylvania Co, NC, 27 Apr (Jamie Adams); and at Cowan's F

ord Wildlife Refuge, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 1 May (Kevin Metcalf).

Lark Sparrow: The individual that visited a feeder in Camden Co, NC, in late February remained at that site for 54 consecutive days, through 15 Apr (James Harrison).

Lincoln's Sparrow: There was also a noticeable movement of this sparrow through the Carolinas in late April. Individuals were seen at SC Botanical Gardens, 19 Apr (Scott Davis, Linda Montgomery); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 25 Apr (Robert Zickus); at Prairie Ridge Ecostation, Wake Co, NC, 28 Apr (Brian O'Shea); along the Roanoke Canal Trail in Halifax Co, NC, 29 Apr (Ricky Davis); and at Leicester Patch, Buncombe Co, NC, 2 May (Doug Johnston).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Individual females were seen in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 22 Apr (Sam Cooper) and visiting a feeder in northwest Berkeley Co, SC, 24-25 Apr (Bob & Monica Bradley, Andy Harrison).

Shiny Cowbird: An adult male returned to the feeders at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 20 Apr (Martin Wall) and was seen by many thereafter.

Louisiana Waterthrush: One photographed at The Bog Garden, Guilford Co, NC, 9 Mar (Matt Wangerin) was early. Singing territorial males near the end of Millis Rd in Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Mar (Chandra Biggerstaff) and in the Green Swamp, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 May (Ricky Davis) were unusual for those sites near the coast.

"Lawrence's Warbler": This rare hybrid was photographed at Reynolda Gardens, Forsyth Co, NC, 19 Apr (John Haire, m. obs.).

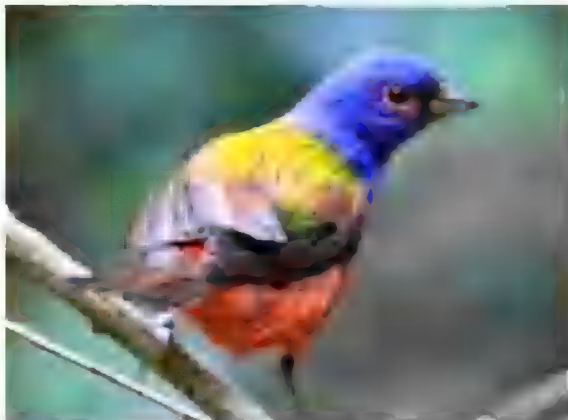
Connecticut Warbler: An adult male was seen and heard singing at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 19-20 May (Rob Biller, m. obs.). A moribund individual was found after a window collision on the campus of UNC – Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, 23 May (*fide* Johnny Wilson).

Mourning Warbler: Two were seen this spring—a singing male at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 10 May (Jay Wherley, m. obs.) and a singing male near the Nat Greene Trail trailhead, Guilford Co, NC, 18 May (Andrew Thornton).

Hooded Warbler: One photographed at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 20 Mar (Susan Harrison) was a little early.

Cerulean Warbler: A singing male was seen and heard along the Roanoke Canal Trail in Roanoke Rapids, Halifax Co, NC, 29-30 Apr (Ricky Davis, m. obs.), a few miles upstream from the historical breeding sites on that river. Unfortunately, it was not seen or heard thereafter, though.

Western Tanager: Individual males visited feeders in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 8-10 Mar (Alan MacEachren, m. obs.); on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Mar (Barbara Spence); and in Durham, Durham Co, NC, 13-18 Apr (Marcia Mandel, m. obs.).



*Painted Bunting, 7 May 2018,
New Hanover County, NC
Photo by Gretchen Schramm*

Black-headed Grosbeak: An immature male visited a feeder in south Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, NC, where it was seen and photographed by many, 11-17 Mar (Anne Reap, m. obs.)

Painted Bunting: North and inland of the species' typical range were individual males visiting feeders in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 4 Mar (David

Alston); in central Scotland Co, NC, 24 Mar through 11 Apr (Whit Newton); and in Chapel Hill, Orange Co, NC, 27 Apr (Rob Gluck, Sharon Kirk). Most unusual was an adult male singing as if on territory in a grassy field along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 18-20 May (Rick Payne, Bob Rybczynski, m. obs.), over a hundred miles away from the species' nearest known breeding site.

Dickcissel: A few of the higher counts at suspected breeding sites were 12 along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 17 May (Jeffrey Greco); five along Stevens Mill Rd in Wayne Co, NC, 20 May (Ricky Davis); seven at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 20 May (John Fussell, et al.); ten at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 26 May (Brian Barchus, et al.); 11 along Benaja Rd in southern Rockingham Co, NC, 27 May (Martin Wall); and six along Cherry Hill Church Rd in Edgecombe Co, NC, 28 May (Davis).



*Dickcissel, 19 May 2018,
Guilford County, NC
Photo by Mary Sonis*

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

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South Carolina

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Sixty-Two Years of Spring Bird Counts in Guilford County, North Carolina

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¹ 7215 Northmoor Terrace, Greensboro NC 27455

Introduction

Over the past 62 years (1957 - 2018), Guilford County birders have endured cold, hot, rainy and windy weather to count birds on a designated date each spring. Thanks to the sustained commitment of volunteers from the Piedmont Bird Club (PBC), we believe this effort represents the longest consecutive Spring Bird Count (SBC) conducted in any North Carolina county. The purpose of this report is to present some of the findings from this SBC. The report is organized as follows: First, we describe our count methodology. Second, the numbers of species and individual birds counted over the years are reported. Third, we describe levels of participant effort on count day. Fourth, we speculate about possible reasons for seeing or not seeing a particular species or larger or smaller numbers of individual birds on count day.

The SBC is normally held on the last Saturday in April or on the first Saturday in May. Over the past 62 years of counting, the dates have ranged from April 27 to May 7. The count is conducted within a count circle, which is a defined circle with a diameter of 15 miles. It is centered at Pisgah Church Road and Battleground Avenue in Greensboro. This census area includes urban and suburban settings as well as more rural areas located in the northern portions of the count circle. Four larger lakes (Higgins, Brandt, Townsend, Jeanette) as well as several smaller waterways and lakes provide open-water habitat. Additionally, the majority of Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTI Airport) is included within the count circle. However, access to this area has been severely curtailed over the past several years because of airport security concerns.

Methods

All living birds, except poultry and other exotic taxa, seen or heard in the count area on count day are recorded. Data from compiler's records were used (Piedmont Bird Club 2016). This report only presents data from count day because past inconsistencies in reports of additional species and their numbers seen during count week prevent summarizing those data. The effort of the "groups" of participants during count day is recorded in terms of the total number of hours spent (party hours), and miles travelled on foot or by car (party miles). The number of participants in a group or party generally ranges from one to five or more.

For the purposes of this paper, the following terms were used to describe the ‘status’ of each species recorded on count day. These terms are defined as follows: permanent resident (P) is present throughout the year; winter resident (W) resides in Guilford County throughout the winter months, but does not breed locally; summer resident (S) does not reside in Guilford County for the entire year but probably or definitely breeds locally; migratory species (M) are normally seen only during their migration season; rare (R) indicates a species that is not seen every year in the local area; accidental (A) indicates a species that is out of its normal range; its occurrence is completely unexpected and is seen less often than rare species; and vagrant (V) is a species whose occurrence is outside of its expected range, and is rarely seen (Koenig 2016, Hendrickson 2018, LeGrand and Haire 2018, McGowan 2018, Westphal 2018).

Results

Species: As a reference point, the total number of bird species reported in Guilford County across all seasons and years for which records have been kept currently stands at 316 species (Piedmont Bird Club, in press). The total number of species observed on count day across the 62 years is 234 and one other taxon, Lawrence’s Warbler (Appendix 1). Appendix 1 presents the species listed in taxonomic order (American Ornithological Society 2018), the status of the species, the number of years the species was seen, the lowest and highest numbers of individual birds counted for each species, as well as the cumulative number (62-year sum) and average number of birds recorded for a given species.

On average 127 (SD = 10.6) different species have been observed each year. The lowest number of species seen on a count day was recorded on 24 Apr 1982 when just 104 species were observed in the count circle. The highest number of species recorded on a count day occurred on 30 Apr 1966. A total of 164 species was observed on that date.

Fifty-four species (23% of the 235 total) were counted in every one of the 62 years (Appendix 1). Of those, 34 are permanent residents, two are winter residents, 17 are summer residents, and one is a migratory species. Fifty-seven species (24% the 235 total) were seen on count day in five or fewer years. Of the 57 seen infrequently on Count Day, 13 are winter residents, four are summer residents, 11 represent species that migrate through our area, six are classified as rare, and the remaining 23 are considered accidental, or vagrant species, or have a dual designation status (e.g., Horned Grebe, WR).

Individual Birds: A total of 470,329 individual birds has been counted over the 62 count days with an annual average count of 7592 (SD = 1900) individual birds. The lowest number of individual birds counted, 4107, occurred on 2 May 1958. The highest number of birds recorded on a count day, 13,074 individual birds, occurred on 29 Apr 1967.

Participants' Effort: Party Hours and Miles: The annual average number of volunteers participating on count day was 31 (SD = 5.6). Only 18 birders participated on 2 May 1959; whereas, 48 birders participated on 6 May 1995, the largest number in any year. Party hours reflect the effort spent by groups of participants. The party hour average across the 62 years was 97.4 (SD = 15.1) hours. The fewest hours spent counting were 60 on 30 Apr 1983, and the most hours spent (144) occurred on 2 May 2009. The groups of birders also reported many miles traveled during the count, both on foot and while driving. The foot miles and driving miles were summed and designated as party miles. The number of party miles ranged from 164 on 30 Apr 1960 to 514 on 2 May 1992 with an annual average of 356 (SD = 67.4) miles

Relationship between Count Effort and Species and Individual Birds Observed: If the groups of participants report greater time spent and more miles traveled, does this greater effort result in a higher number of species and total number of birds counted?

As one might have expected, a significant relationship was found between the total number of species reported and the total number of individual birds counted (Pearson correlation = 0.72, $p=0.01$). The relationship between the total number of hours spent birding and the number of species observed also was significant (Pearson correlation = 0.44, $p=0.05$), as was the relationship between the number of miles travelled and the number of species observed (Pearson correlation = 0.41, $p=0.05$).

A significant relationship was found between the number of birds counted and the total number of hours spent counting birds (Pearson correlation = 0.55, $p=0.05$). That is, not surprisingly, more hours devoted to counting resulted in more birds being seen or heard. The relationship between the number of birds counted and the number of participants counting those birds also was significant (Pearson correlation = 0.55, $p=0.05$).

In combination these factors, i.e. species counted, party hours and party miles, accounted for about 50% of the variability in the numbers of individuals counted. Additional factors, including simple random variation, are likely contributing to variation in the number of species and number of birds seen during count day throughout the years.

A Longitudinal Perspective: Sixty-two years of SBC data enable examination of species and trends in the numbers of individual birds across the seven decades. Only two years of data were available in the 1950s; only eight years of data were available in the most recent decade. The total number of birds (abundance) for each species was summed across each decade. Each species received a ranking based on total number of birds counted in each decade. Appendix 2 presents the 21 species and their ranking in the "Top Ten" most abundant species in one or more decades.

Seventy-one percent (15 of 21 total) of the species are permanent residents in Guilford County.

Based on their rankings in all seven decades, three species are considered the most prevalent. These are the American Robin, European Starling and Northern Cardinal. The European Starling is the only species receiving a “Top Five” ranking across each decade of the 62-year count period. No other bird can claim such distinction. Given that this species was introduced in Central Park, New York in 1890 (Koeing 2016), the European Starling has demonstrated its ability to disperse and adapt to new habitats. The European Starling’s peak abundance occurred in the 1970s and their numbers have declined in subsequent decades. The American Robin and Northern Cardinal also are abundant as indicated by their rankings across decades.

Other trends emerge in concert with changes in the landscape of Guilford County over the past 62 years. The Wood Thrush (Fig.1) and Bobolink were among the “Top Ten” most prevalent species in the 1950s and 1960s, respectively. However, as reflected by their rankings, declines in their abundance are evident by the 1970s. The Red-winged Blackbird and House Sparrow show similar trends, ranking in the “Top Ten” species in the early decades and subsequently falling in abundance and rankings.

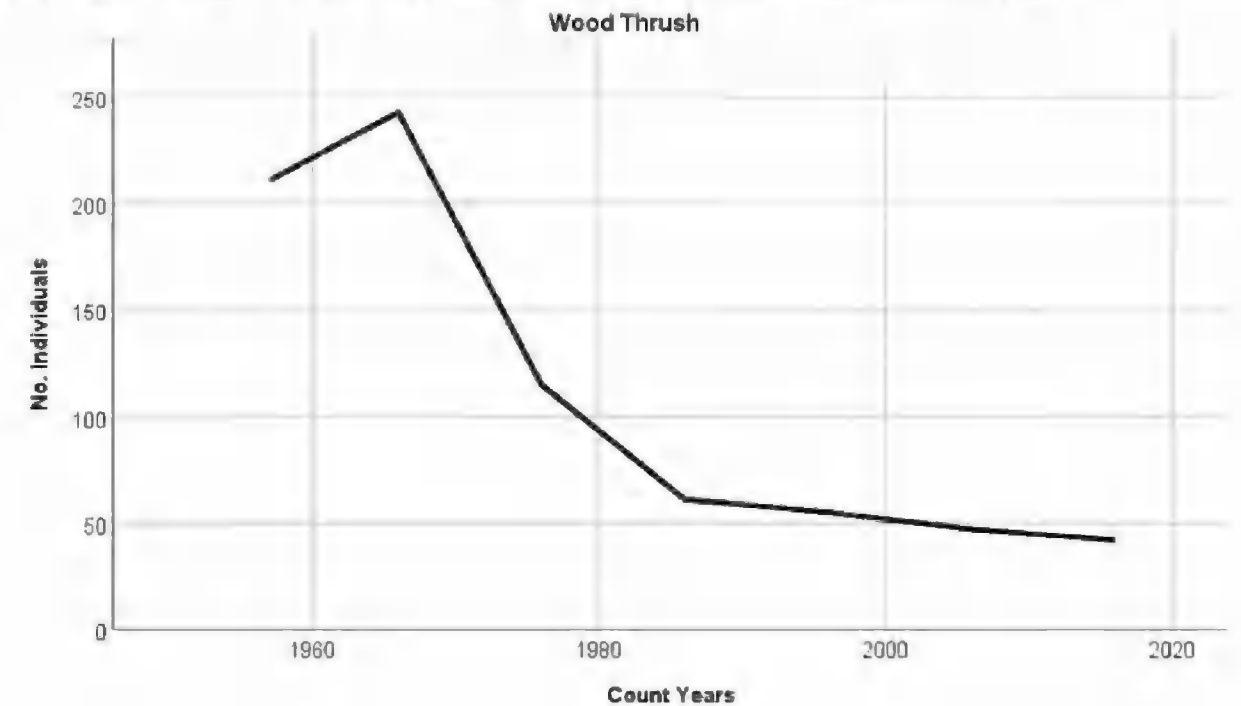


Figure 1. Representative species ranked in the Top Ten that showed a decline in the number of individuals counted over the 62 years. The vertical axis anchors the total number of individual birds counted. The horizontal axis represents years. N.B. All figures show variation on the y-axis due to scaling of the y-axis relative to the total number of birds seen for that species.

Species such as the Canada Goose (Fig. 2), Mallard, and Double-crested Cormorant that use open-water spaces have “Top Ten” rankings in one or more of the last three decades. The Canada Goose numbers rose rapidly, appearing among the “Top Ten” species in the 1990s and rising into the “Top Five” in abundance during the current and two previous decades. The abundance of Mallards peaked in the 1990s and has declined since then. The numbers of Double-crested Cormorants have increased in the current and last decade as evidenced by a “Top Ten” ranking in the current decade.

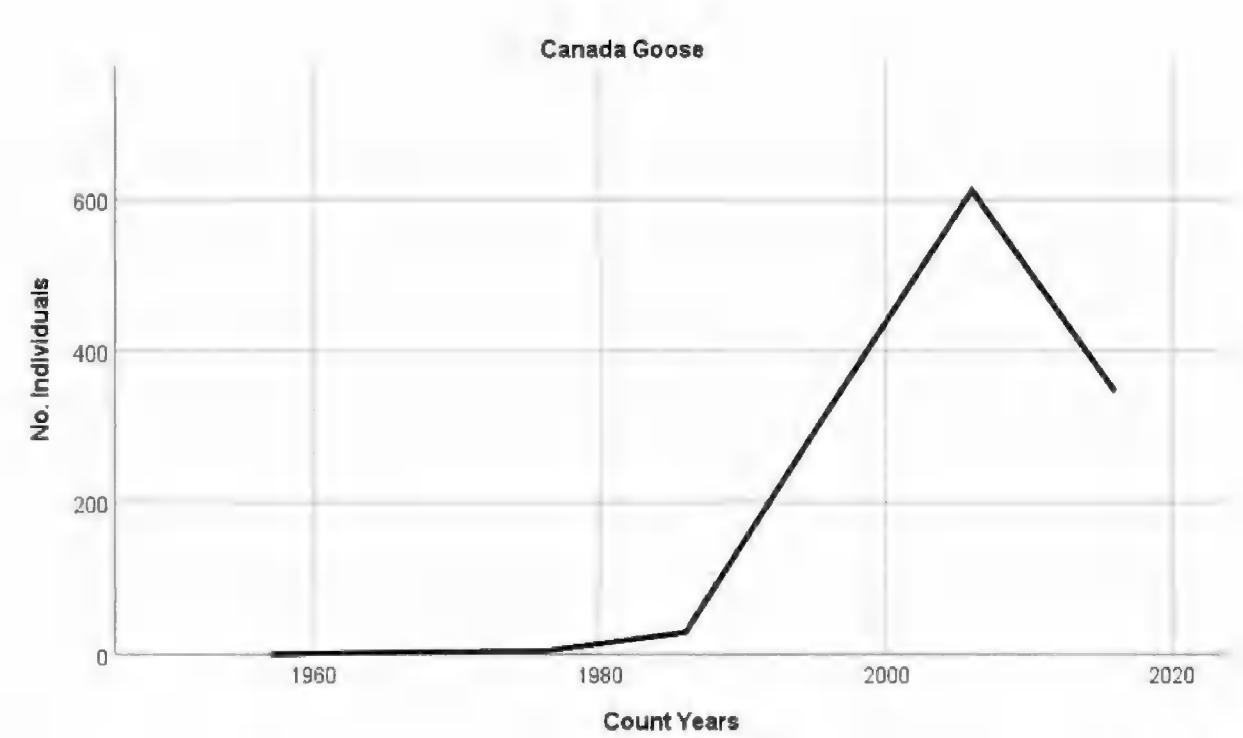


Figure 2. Canada Goose is a representative species ranked in the Top Ten that shows an overall increase in abundance through 2006. The vertical axis anchors the total number of individual birds counted. The horizontal axis represents years.

Species not in the “Top Ten” rankings also demonstrate increases or decreases in abundance across the count years. A representative species demonstrating an increase in abundance is the Brown-headed Nuthatch (Fig. 3); a decrease in abundance is noted for the Northern Bobwhite (Fig. 4).

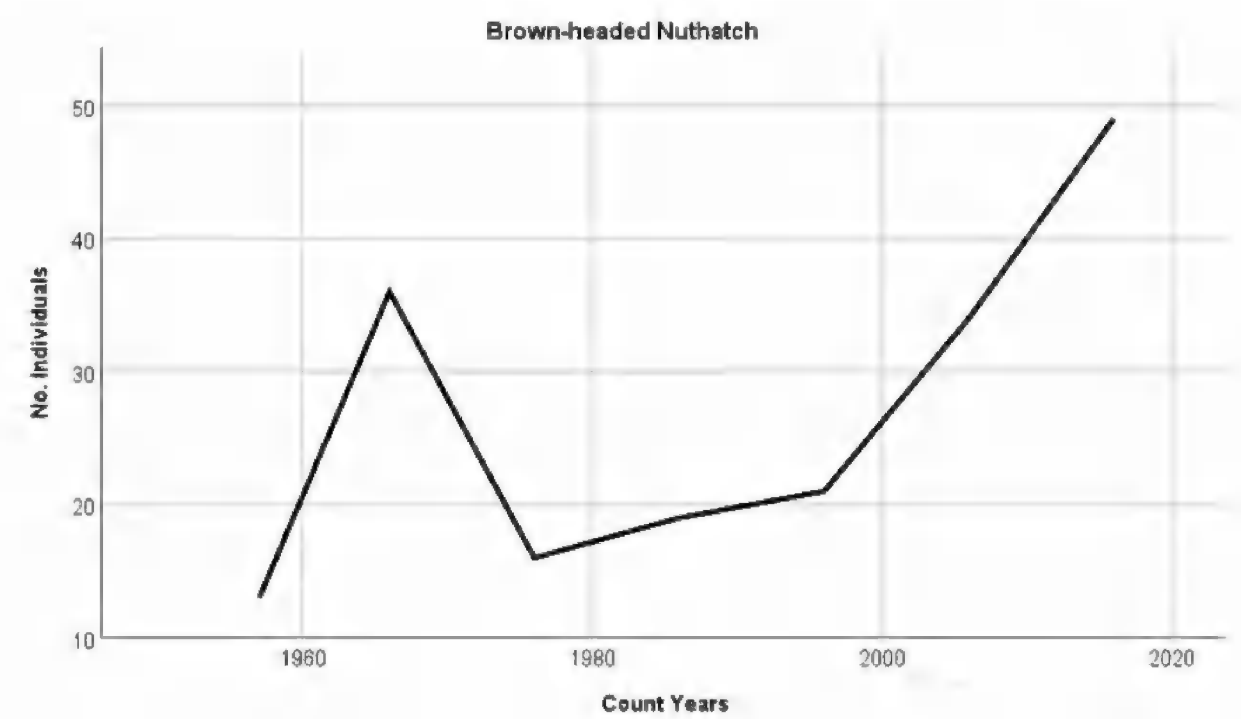


Figure 3. Apparent increase in Brown-headed Nuthatch numbers across the 62 years of the counts. The vertical axis anchors the total number of individual birds counted. The horizontal axis represents years

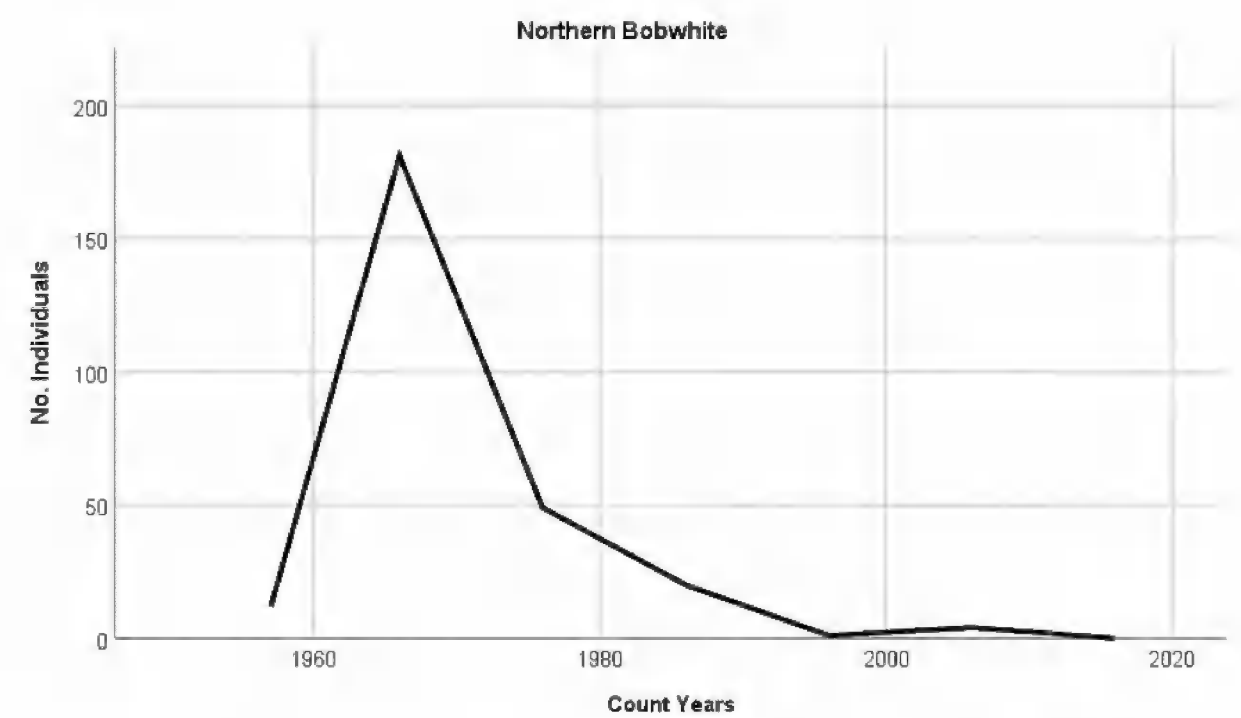


Figure 4. Representative species that showed a decline in the number of individuals counted over the 62 years. The vertical axis anchors the total number of individual birds counted. The horizontal axis represents years.

These findings provide a longitudinal perspective on the species recorded on SBC day. The remainder of the report speculates about possible reasons for fluctuations in the numbers of species seen, the numbers of

individuals observed for a species across the count years and subsequent ranking of a species in the “Top Ten.” These speculations are made cautiously.

Discussion

Possible Reasons for Observing or Not Observing A Species:

Count day numbers represent an annual snapshot of the species and abundance of individual birds found within the count circle. Many factors influence the number of species seen or heard in a single day, and these factors are interrelated and compounded across the 62-year count span. These factors include but are not limited to:

1. Human observers

A basic assumption is that all birders do their best to identify the birds in their count area. Factors that may influence an observer’s count include the ability of birder to see, hear and identify the species. The birder’s familiarity with the assigned territory and “knowing” the right place and time to find birds. Other possible factors include the consistency with which sites in the count circle are visited each year, the time available for the count given competing obligations, time available to conduct nocturnal counts, and possibly fatigue, as some birders may spend most of the day observing birds.

2. Weather conditions

Birders and birds encountered hot, cold and rainy conditions on count day. The average annual temperature on count days was a high of 73.4⁰ F, and a low of 52.8⁰ F. The hottest count day occurred on 29 Apr 2017 when the average temperature was 79 degrees. Despite the heat, 34 birders spent 98.3 hours birding and observed 121 species and 9038 individual birds. On 2 May 1964, the coldest count day, the average temperature was 50 degrees. On this day, the 30 birders spent 111.5 hours birding and saw 146 species and 10,961 individual birds. It is possible that some variation in both species numbers and numbers of individual birds could be related to temperature on count day.

The mean rainfall on count day is 0.07 inches. The 3 May 1997 count day was the rainiest (1.01 inches). The 36 participants spent 105.5 hours observing and reported 127 species and 7435 birds.

Although we expect birds to have sought shelter during these conditions, these dates do not correspond to the count day with the lowest number of birders (1959), lowest total species (1982) or lowest number of birds (1958). Weather conditions (high and low temperature, and precipitation) in Guilford County on count day did not appear to have a significant effect on birders, species, or number of birds counted.

Adverse or favorable weather conditions on count day as well as impending weather events here or in other areas may influence the arrival or departure of migratory species. For example, some species may have stayed later than anticipated, e.g., Northern Pintail and Green-winged Teal. Weather

conditions at the coast, may have influenced some species to drop into Guilford County, e.g., Great Cormorant and Anhinga.

3. Changes in habitat

Habitat changes have been reported to be both detrimental and beneficial to different bird species. As noted in the PBC publication, “The Birds of Guilford County, NC: Then and Now”, Greensboro’s steady increase in population has been supported by increased housing development as well as expansion of roads, industry, and the PTI Airport (Piedmont Bird Club 2017).

In 1958 (early in the count period under review) Lake Brandt was modified to raise the water to its current level and, two new lakes were built: Lake Townsend (1969) and two decades later Oak Hollow Reservoir (1972) (Piedmont Bird Club 2017). These changes have benefitted some species that use open water. The rise in abundance of the Double-crested Cormorant is attributed in part to an active roosting site on Lake Brandt. Open water access in addition to other resources (food, nesting sites) have afforded the Canada Goose with sufficient habitat resulting in a population explosion and the species becoming a permanent resident. The first two Canada Geese were reported in the 1965 Count; and, since 1981, a dramatic increase in numbers has been observed with the highest number of 612 individuals recorded in the 2006 Count (Fig. 2). The dip in the total number of Canada Geese counted in recent years is possibly due to multiple factors including Canada Goose abatement efforts (Romano 2018).

Declines in open fields and grasslands as well as changes in farming practices may contribute to the declines in ground nesters such as the Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Horned Lark, as well as other species that rely on this habitat, e.g. Bobolink, and Red-winged Blackbird. An interesting observation is the Northern Bobwhite’s spike in numbers occurring between 1962 and 1974 with a peak count of 181 individual birds in 1966 (Fig. 4). Perhaps the spike represents a new count site within the count circle or an increase in the population of Northern Bobwhites during that time period. Prior to and following this spike, the number of birds counted was generally under 50. Since 1998, only 28 birds have been counted, and in nine of the last 21 years no Northern Bobwhite has been reported on the SBC. The Horned Lark is another species not reported on the SBC since 1999.

Data on the total acreage of agrarian lands lost in Guilford County and the count circle are difficult to obtain. As noted previously, most of the PTI Airport lies in the count circle. Expansion of the airport reduced the grassland and woodland habitat available in the count circle. Notable trends in land use include amalgamation of smaller farms into larger parcels (USDA Agricultural Statistics Service 2017). This trend might result in less diverse plant species to support avian populations, particularly the grassland species. Open spaces are being purchased by conservancies and other groups

(Guilford County Open Space Preserves 2017) and farm land is being sold for development. In 2017, Guilford County Open Space Preserves had 14 sites consisting of a total of just 1727 acres, less than half the size of the Piedmont Triad airport (3770 acres).

Forested land is a haven for the cavity-nesting species including Owls, Woodpeckers, Swallows, Purple Martins, and many song birds. The Wild Turkey lives in mature forests and relies on both open fields and edges of forests for foraging. This species has been seen during 17 of 62 count years, making it difficult to assess loss of habitat and abundance of the species. A reduction in forested lands may, in part, explain the reduction in individuals of some woodland species, for example, the Wood Thrush (Fig. 1).

The U.S. Forestry Service (2017) survey of selected plots of land in Guilford County shows an increase in Virginia pine which is good news for the Brown-headed Nuthatch (Fig. 3). Since the 1980s, a steady increase has occurred in the number of Brown-headed Nuthatches counted.

4. Birds themselves

Many factors contribute to why a species or number of individual birds are seen on count day. Birds may be actively moving about or sheltered and not visible to the counters. Or, birds may just be outside the count perimeter and thus cannot be counted. Timing (arrival and departure) of migrating species can vary slightly and affect counts. The complexity of such fluctuations in species observed and particularly in bird populations is a rich area for research (Koenig 2016). Fluctuating increases or decreases in species and numbers of individual birds counted across the years may also represent normal variation in the bird population; or in the relationship between abundance and availability of resources (nest sites, food); or in the observational process itself.

Sufficient numbers of nesting sites within the count circle may facilitate the maintenance or increase in abundance of birds, thereby increasing the chances of a birder observing the bird on count day. Abundance of food supply could influence the arrival or departure of migratory species. Additionally, the loss of foraging sites could result in movement of the species to different foraging sites within or outside the count circle and potentially reduce the chances of that species being observed.

Additionally, parasites, pathogens and use of pesticides could affect individual birds as well as the entire population of a species or many species (Koenig 2016). Over time these potentially detrimental effects could be reflected by decreased numbers observed during subsequent count years.

The population of birds is and will continue to be influenced by two driving forces, climate change and landscape change. In the past century, climate changes (temperature, precipitation and sea level) have accelerated and are a threat to bird populations. As warming occurs there is a greater mismatch between nesting and breeding behavior and maximum availability

of food resources to raise young. The National Audubon Society Report (2015) documents more than half of the birds in North America as climate threatened or climate endangered. Those species of birds that are unable to rapidly adapt may face an accelerated march toward extinction.

The continued change in landscape due to Greensboro's population growth is and will be another driving force affecting bird populations. Currently, the last three segments of the Greensboro Urban Loop have just been completed or will be completed by 2021. The projected preferred routes for these segments are approximately 37.5 miles long and consume approximately 1775 acres. According to the N. C. Department of Transportation Project Environmental Studies Report (2018), these acres include bird habitat, i.e., cultivated fields, woodlands, wetland habitats, open water venues, floodplains, as well as stream crossings. Approximately 4000 feet of streams will be relocated. Much of the pending loss in bird habitat is located within the count circle.

Summary

This 1957 to 2018 span represents one of the longest consecutive SBCs for any count circle in North Carolina. Many individuals have participated in the SBCs in Guilford County, and the number of participants and the number of hours they spent while counting birds are significantly related to the total number of birds tallied on count day.

The SBC provides some insight into the complexity of human-bird interaction and the complexity of bird behavior, and their population changes and distribution. Thus, factors in addition to the time spent 'in the field' on count day influence the number of individual birds counted each year. Some species have increased in abundance over the years. Perhaps these species are more opportunistic or better able to adapt to the changes in Guilford County's habitat; or they have benefitted from man-made bird friendly environments, i.e., nesting sites and feeding stations. Other species have declined, due in part to the changes in habitat. Conservation strategies including preservation of open spaces and retention of forested and agrarian areas may benefit all species of birds in the County. As the SBCs continue, more definitive trends regarding apparent increases and decreases in the populations of species may emerge, particularly in the face of climate change and the expansion of infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing Greensboro population.

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We would like to thank the PBC compilers who provided the raw data for the Spring Counts, and to H. Hendrickson, H. Link, L. Moseley, Lou S., and A. Van Sant who provided extensive comments and suggestions to improve the paper. We also thank those volunteers who conducted the Guilford County Spring Bird Counts.

Appendices

Editor's Note: In the past *The Chat* endeavored to provide in printed format numerical or statistical data provided by various authors. In some cases the associated appendices or tables constituted a not insignificant portion of the particular periodical in which they were presented.

Feedback from readers suggests that making this information accessible while not resorting to page upon page of graphs or tables might be an opportunity. Now that *The Chat* has fully embraced digital publishing, we have the ability to provide ancillary data in ways that may make it more usable to the interested reader, while maintaining a cleaner look across the publication. To this end, I am experimenting with embedding tables and charts as links within the native PDF format of *The Chat*. To access these appenndices, generally also provided in PDF format, simply click on the embedded documents. In this case of this article, **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2** are provided in this format. Please give it a try!

We continue to try and incorporate feedback from readers in the final product, so both positive and constructive comments are appreciated.

To view Appendix 1, click here:

To view Appendix 2, click here:

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Summer 2018, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

<i>Winter</i>	<i>December 1–February 28</i>	<i>due March 20</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>March 1–May 31</i>	<i>due June 20</i>
<i>Summer</i>	<i>June 1–July 31</i>	<i>due August 20</i>
<i>Fall</i>	<i>August 1–November 30</i>	<i>due December 20</i>

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **BRP** – Blue Ridge Parkway, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **St** – Street, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Gadwall: A seemingly healthy drake summered in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 9 Jun into Aug (Roberta Newton, Ann Van Sant, m. obs.).

American Wigeon: Two, a drake and a hen, on South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 6 Jun (Audrey Whitlock) were late to depart.

Green-winged Teal: Two, a drake and a hen, near the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 7 Jun (Karen Lebing, m. obs.) were unusual for June.

King Eider: The hen that was seen around Ft Moultrie and the Pitt St Causeway, Charleston Co, SC, in May remained through at least 29 Jun (Pam Ford, Craig Watson).

Common Eider: A hen photographed under Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 8 Jun (Alan MacEachren, Audrey Whitlock) was late. Interestingly, this individual appeared to be the Hudson Bay subspecies, rather than the Atlantic subspecies that is typical here.

White-winged Scoter: One on the ocean off Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 21 Jun (Scott Hartley) was late.

Bufflehead: A drake lingered at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, through 15 Jun (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.).

Common Merganser: Breeding was confirmed at two sites in the NC mountains—on Big Laurel Creek near Hot Springs, Madison Co, when a hen was seen with six juveniles 24 Jun, 5 Jul (Greer Karbowski) and 15 Jul (Johanna Preiszner) and on the South Toe River in Yancey Co, when a hen was seen with ten juveniles, 1 Jul (Clifton Avery).

Red-breasted Merganser: A drake photographed on Lake Keowee, Oconee Co, SC, 5 Jul (Don Lenahan) was unusual for an inland site in summer.

White-winged Dove: Individuals visited feeders in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 4 Jun (Deb Winter); in Williston, Carteret Co, NC, 7-8 Jun (Kathy Calvert); and in Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 15-17 Jun (Audrey Whitlock).

Sora: One heard calling on the north end of Piney Island, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Jun (John Fussell) was probably a late migrant or a non-breeding lingerer. Fussell wonders, however, if the species may occasionally breed in eastern Carteret County. Evidence of breeding in the Carolinas by this species is yet to be obtained.

Limpkin: At least three were seen in the Carolinas this summer—individuals along the Black River on the border of Bladen Co and Pender Co, NC, 1 Jul (*fide* John Fussell) and 14 Jul (Jamie Adams); at Congaree National Park, Richland Co, SC, 12-21 Jul (John Grego, m. obs.); and at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, where photographed, 20 Jul (Allison Leigh).

American Avocet: Sightings at inland sites included one on the shore of Lake Hartwell in Clemson, Oconee Co, SC, 11 Jul (William Potter); two at the Mills River WTP, Henderson Co, SC, 14 Jul (Elizabeth Fitts, m. obs.); and eight at the Mills River WTP, 16 Jul (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.). The latter sighting provided a new record high count for the mountain region.

American Golden-Plover: One seen and photographed at South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 15 Jun (Bob Martz) and 16 Jun (Karen Lebing, Audrey Whitlock) was very unusual for the month of June.

Wilson's Plover: 22, including two juvenile birds, around the east side of Bogue Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 17 Jul (Ed Phillips) was a noteworthy count for that area.

Upland Sandpiper: Two photographed at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 13 Jul (Elizabeth & Jonathan Anderegg) were the first southbound migrants reported this year. Five in the grass around the observation area at Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Jul (Sam Cooper) was a good count.

Long-billed Curlew: At Cape Romain NWR in Charleston Co, SC, one was seen on Bulls Island, 2 Jul (David McLean, Chris Snook) and two were seen around Sandy Point, 4 Jul (Jim Buxton, et al.). The species is almost year-round at that refuge now, only absent mid-May through mid-June.

Ruddy Turnstone: One at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 28 Jul (Ricky Davis) was a good find for that inland site.



*Curlew Sandpiper, 27 July 2018, Dare Co, NC
Photo by Karen Lebing*

Curlew Sandpiper: An adult male, beginning to molt out of breeding plumage, was seen and photographed by many on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 22-26 Jul (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.) and on the flooded lawn in front of the nearby Bodie Island Lighthouse, 27-28 Jul (Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.). It has been almost a decade since the last sighting of this Eurasian vagrant in the Carolinas.

Short-billed Dowitcher: One in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 7-8 Jul (Henry Link, m. obs.) was a good find for an inland site and somewhat early for a southbound migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: One photographed at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 21 Jul (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was very early.

Willet: One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 24 Jul (Eddie Owens) was a good find for that inland site.

Red Phalarope: A ragged-looking individual seen and photographed at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 8-15 Jun (Marcia Lyons, m. obs.) and 28 Jun (Karen Lebing) was incredibly unusual, the first ever seen in NC during the summer.

Sooty Tern: The only one seen from shore this summer was an adult individual off Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, SC, 26 Jul (Steve Barlow).

Roseate Tern: One of two continued from late May at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, through at least 8 Jul (Megan Baker, et al.). A leg-banded individual photographed on the beach 14 miles north of Cape Point, 22 Jul (Michael Gosselin, et al.) was a different individual than the two seen at Cape Point, as those did not have leg bands.

Fea's Petrel: This rare tubenose was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 7 Jul (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Shearwater: A individual photographed at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Jun (Shawn Smolen-Morton) was a good find from shore. A moribund individual was found on North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 19 Jun (Gilbert Grant). Sick/injured individuals were found along the Pitt St Causeway, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Jun (Pam Ford, m. obs.) and on Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 5 Jul (Jimmy Welch).

Audubon's Shearwater: A sick/injured individual was found on the beach in Emerald Isle, Carteret Co, NC, 24 Jul (Andrew Melnick).

Wood Stork: Locally unusual were individuals at Richardson Taylor Preserve, Guilford Co, NC, 2-3 Jun (Amy Hanson, m. obs.); in J. Morgan Futch Game Land, Tyrrell Co, NC, 4-13 Jun (Kimberly McCargo, m. obs.); and at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 27 Jun (Jonathan Cantrell). One seen and photographed along the Little Tennessee River Greenway in Macon Co, NC, 21-22 Jul (Chayse Davis, m. obs.) was especially unusual for the mountain region. As expected, all of these individuals were immature birds, as immatures are more likely to wander than adults. 26 near the Tyger River in Union Co, SC, 31 Jul (Mark Carroll) and ten at a small pond in Rock Hill, York Co, SC, 31 Jul (Diane Gabanyic) were good counts for sites in the Piedmont.

Magnificent Frigatebird: There was a small flurry of sightings in early June, but none thereafter. Individuals were seen in flight over Isle of Palms, Charleston Co, SC, a juvenile, 2 Jun (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); over Kure Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 2 Jun (Mark Galizio); near Lockwood Folly Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, a male, 3 Jun (Robert Hunnings); over Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 10 Jun (Randy Newman); and over Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, a juvenile, 13 Jun (Karen Lebing, et al.).

Brown Booby: A sub-adult female found at the Apache Pier in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 29 May, was collected by the Avian Conservation Center for rehabilitation and expected to recover (Emily Davis).

Great Cormorant: An immature bird photographed on a jetty at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 16 Jun (Sam Cooper) was unusual for summer.

American Bittern: One seen at North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 24 Jun and 22 Jul (John Fussell, et al.) was unusual for summer.



*Great Blue Heron [White-morph]
17 July 2018, Henderson Co, NC
Photo by Wayne Forsythe*

“Great White Heron”: A white-morph Great Blue Heron was seen and photographed in the French Broad River Valley of Henderson Co, NC, 17-25 Jul (Wayne Forsythe).

Tricolored Heron: On schedule with post-breeding dispersal, immature birds started showing up at lakes in the NC Piedmont in late July, with individuals seen at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, 19 Jul (Paul Taillie); on Shattalon Lake, Forsyth Co, 24 Jul (David & Susan Disher, et al.); on Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, 25 Jul (Matt Wangerin); and at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, 25 Jul (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.).

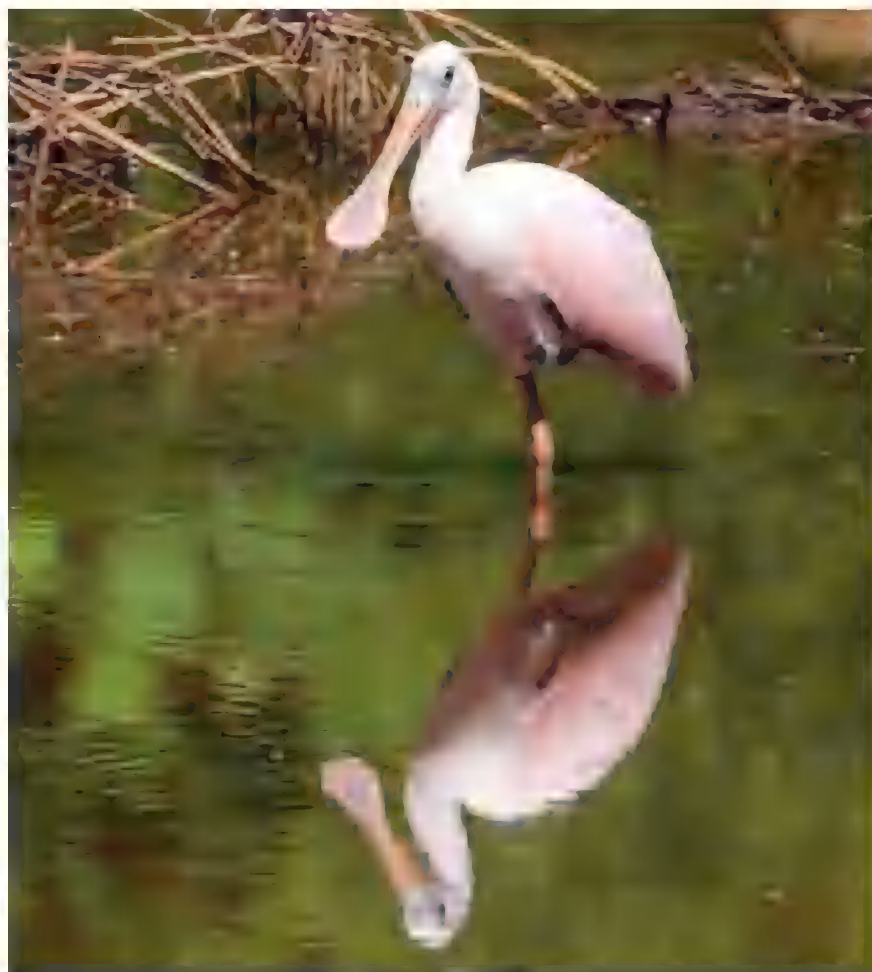
Reddish Egret: Sightings made along the NC coast included one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 3 Jun intermittently through July (Alan MacEachren, m. obs.); two at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, 5 Jun (Gilbert Grant); one at Cape Point, Dare Co, 6-14 Jun (Michael Gosselin, m. obs.); and one at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, 26 Jul (Jeannie Kraus).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: It's possible this species bred in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, as a group of four, including at least two juveniles, were flushed by kayak, 8 Jul (Matt Spangler).

Glossy Ibis: One in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 24-29 Jul (Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.) was a great find for a site so far from the coast.

Roseate Spoonbill: There was an unprecedented northward irruption of this conspicuous wading bird this summer, with dozens of sightings made north and inland of the species' typical range. Individuals were county firsts in Davidson, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 27-28 May (m. obs.); on the French Broad River in Henderson Co, NC, 3 Jun (LeNorah Allen); at J. Morgan Futch Game Land, Tyrrell Co, NC, 6-13 Jun (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); at Hap Simpson Park, Transylvania Co, NC, 7 Jun (Lindsay Rutland); at a subdivision pond in Simpsonville, Greenville Co, SC, 23 Jun (Len Kopka); and on Lake Tillery, Stanly Co, NC, 8 Jul (Jennifer Archambault, Bill Mullin). Sightings made along the NC coast

included three at Cape Point, Dare Co, 14 Jun through 17 Jul (m. obs.); three at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 5 Jul (Amy McLane); and three near Cape Lookout, Carteret Co, 11 Jul (Jess Hawkins). Sightings made in the NC Piedmont included two in the Crabtree Creek wetland along N Raleigh Blvd in Wake Co, 15 Jun through 8 Jul (Alysia Richard, m. obs.); three in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Durham Co and Chatham Co, 8-31 Jul (Matt Spangler, m. obs.); one around Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, 24-25 Jul (Tom Baker, m. obs.); and two at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, 24-25 Jul (Eddie Owens). Up to three in the wetlands along N Rugby Rd in Henderson Co, 15-31 Jul (m. obs.) were especially remarkable for the mountain region. As expected, the majority of these sightings involved immature birds, as they are more likely to wander than adults.



*Roseate Spoonbill, 27 May 2018
Mecklenburg Co, NC
Photo by Rob Van Epps*

Swallow-tailed Kite: Nesting was confirmed along the Black River in Pender Co, NC, when a nest with two nearly-fledged juveniles was photographed 17 Jun (Derb Carter). This nest site is only the second ever documented in North Carolina.

Mississippi Kite: One photographed in flight over Frisco, Dare Co, NC, 5 Jun (Maili Waters, et al.) was very unusual for the Outer Banks.

Broad-winged Hawk: Individuals seen in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 3 Jul (Sam Cooper) and photographed along the I'On Swamp Trail, Charelston Co, SC, 5 Jul (Tony Masso) were unusual for sites so near the coast during the mid-summer.

Burrowing Owl: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Burrowing Owl on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 30 Jul through 5 Aug (Tammy Hester, m. obs.).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One, either a female or an immature bird, photographed perched on a powerline just west of Gaffney, Cherokee Co, SC, 15 Jul (Michael Robertson, et al.) was the only one reported this summer.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: One photographed at Long Creek Park, Forsyth Co, NC, 2 Jun (Jesse Anderson, et al.) was a good find.

Willow Flycatcher: A singing male behaved as if on territory at the Chuck Hollow Lane Wetland in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 29 May through 10 Jun (Dennis Kent, John Scavetto, m. obs.).

Cliff Swallow: Nesting was discovered at three nearby sites around Harlowe, Carteret Co, NC, in June—where NC-101 crosses Core Creek, with 200 birds around 140 active nests, 4 Jun (John Fussell); at a farm shed near Harlowe, with 12 birds gathering mud, 4 Jun (Fussell); and where NC-101 crosses Harlowe Creek, with 80 birds around 48 active nests, 28 Jun (Fussell, Martha Mayo). Fussell notes that “although the species nests regularly in adjacent Craven County . . . the numbers found this year at two sites in Carteret County are completely unprecedented.” Active nests found under several bridges over the Tar River in Greenville, Pitt Co, NC, with 75+ birds in total at those sites in mid-June (Patricia & Russ Tyndall) were also locally unusual.

Hermit Thrush: A few of the higher counts at sites in the NC mountains included five at Clingmans Dome, Swain Co, 7 Jun (Michael Harvey); 11 along the Profile Trail at Grandfather Mountain SP, Avery Co, 8 Jul (Guy McGrane); five, including a juvenile bird, along the Bald Knob Ridge Trail, Yancey Co, 19 Jul (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal); and up to four on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, throughout the summer (Rick Knight, m. obs.).

Red Crossbill: 33 around the Beacon Heights Overlook on the BRP in Avery Co, NC, 4 Jul (Jeff Lewis, et al.) was a good count.

Vesper Sparrow: Breeding was confirmed at Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, when two juveniles were seen there alongside adults, 18 Jun (Chris Kelly).

Lark Sparrow: One photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 4 Jun (Maili Waters, et al.) was very unusual for a site outside of the Sandhills in summer.

Savannah Sparrow: Possibly nesting in the NC mountains were two, one singing, in a grassy field in western Watauga Co, 5 Jun (Guy McGrane) and two, one of which was seen carrying food, along Hannah Ford Rd in Transylvania Co, 24 Jul (Simon Thompson, et al.). An individual seen along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 1-11 Jun (Michael Plauché, m. obs.) and 25-31 Jul (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.) was unusual for summer. One photographed at the Voice of America site in northwest Beaufort Co, NC, 5 Jun (Karen Lebing, et al.) probably was a late migrant.

Bobolink: Seven males were behaving as if on territory in a grassy field in western Watauga Co, NC, 5 Jun (Guy McGrane). Two, a male and a female, seen in a grassy field along the French Broad River in central Transylvania Co, NC, 21 Jun (Michael Plauché) was suggestive of attempted breeding there. One seen and heard calling in flight over the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR in Washington Co, NC, 15 Jul (Ricky Davis) almost certainly was an early fall migrant.

Golden-winged Warbler: A singing male on territory in Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, 6-19 Jun (Clifton Avery, Chris Kelly) was a first for that site. Kelly mentions that “Christmas Tree production has been phased out (at that site) over the past 15 years” and this bird was found in one of those former tree fields. Breeding was confirmed in western Macon Co, NC, when two adults were seen with two recently fledged juveniles, 24 Jun (Alex Merritt).

“Brewster’s Warbler”: A singing male “Brewster’s Warbler” was also on territory in Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, 6-19 Jun (Clifton Avery, Chris Kelly).

Kentucky Warbler: Breeding was confirmed along the BRP near Bull Gap, Buncombe Co, NC, when an adult male was seen feeding two fledged juveniles, 15 Jul (Simon Thompson). Though the elevation of the nesting site, 3200 feet above sea level, is not unusual, Thompson notes that “this species has barely a toe-hold in the county anymore and the numbers keep declining.”

Magnolia Warbler: Suggestive of attempted breeding in the NC mountains was a singing male near the trailhead of the Bald Knob Ridge Trail, Yancey Co, 20 May through 6 Jun (John Gerwin, m. obs.); a singing male along the BRP near the Beacon Heights Overlook, Avery Co, 3-8 Jul (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); and up to two birds on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, throughout the summer (Rick Knight).



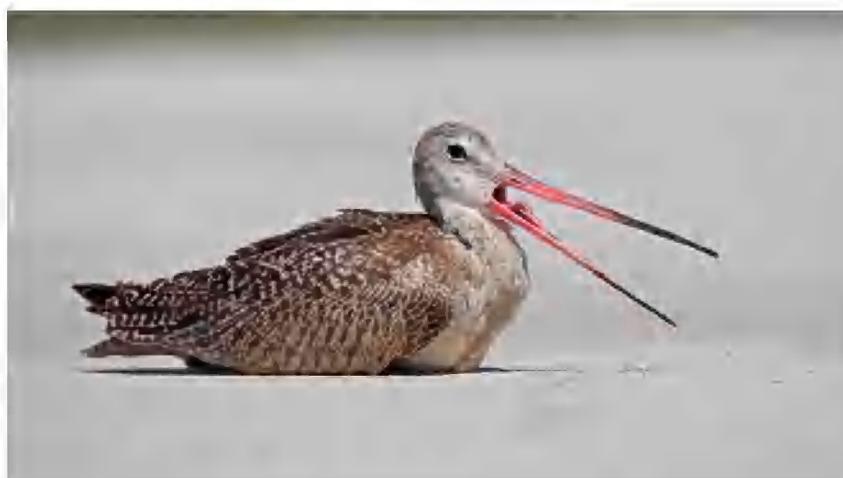
*Blackpoll Warbler,
11 Jun 18, Dare Co, NC Photo by
Karen Lebing*

Blackpoll Warbler: An adult male well-photographed in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 11 Jun (Karen Lebing) was quite late. It may have been quite lost as well, as Lebing notes it was headed south down Hatteras Island.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: On territory in the NC mountains were six singing males at Clingmans Dome, Swain Co, 7 Jun (Michael Harvey); four singing males along Black Balsam Rd in Haywood Co, throughout the summer (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal, m. obs.); and one singing male on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, throughout the summer (Rick Knight, m. obs.). Nesting was not reported at any site this year.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A female photographed at a feeder in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 21 Jun (Lester Coble) was extremely unusual for a site outside the mountains in mid-summer, possibly the latest spring migrant ever documented in the Coastal Plain.

Dickcissel: Dickcissels continued from late spring at multiple suspected breeding sites in the Piedmont and coastal plain. Numbers grew at North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, to 14 singing males on 10 Jun (John Fussell, Jack Fennell). Dickcissels continued along Benaja Rd in southern Rockingham Co, NC, until the wheat was harvested in late June and none were seen thereafter (Martin Wall). Four singing males were seen along a stretch of Barrier Store Rd on the border of Cabarrus Co and Stanly Co, NC, 16 Jun (Greg Hays, Taylor Piephoff). Two singing males were seen and heard in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, throughout the period (m. obs.). Up to six were seen at the traditional breeding site just north of Cowpens, Spartanburg Co, SC, this summer (m. obs.).

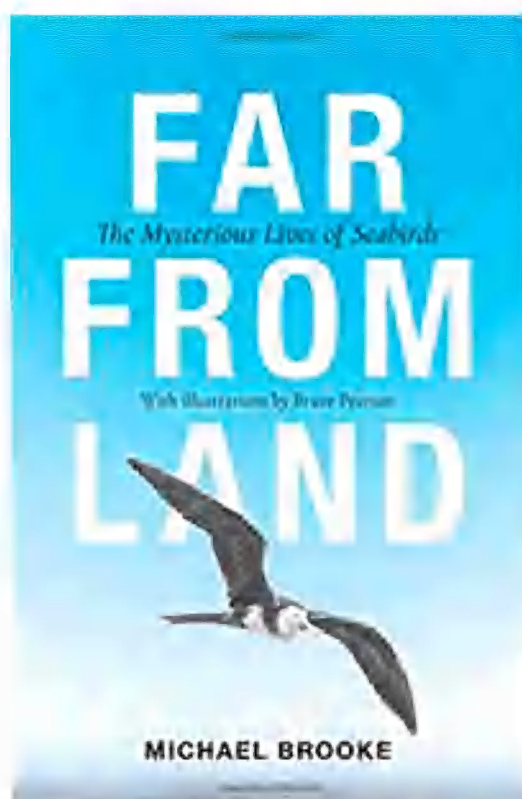


Marbled Godwit, courtesy of Mary Sonis

Birder's Book Review

Far From Land: The Mysterious Lives of Seabirds

Steve Shultz



*Far From Land: The
Mysterious Lives of Seabirds*
Michael Brooke with
illustrations by Bruce
Pearson
ISBN 978-0691174181, 264
pages, hardback
2018, Princeton University
Press, \$29.95

Can birds sleep while they fly? Do murres swim or fly when they migrate? (The answer might surprise you!) Do albatross really fly thousands of miles on foraging trips to glean food for hungry chicks? Why do male and female of some species feed in distinctly different areas?

If you've ever wanted to know the answers to these questions, or simply satisfy a curiosity about "the secret life of pelagic birds" then *Far From Land: The Mysterious Lives of Seabirds* by Michael Brooke may be the next must-read on your list. And in the case that you are not interested in learning juicy tidbits like where Cory's Shearwaters go in the winter, you probably know a birder who is, and after all, it's not too early to start that holiday shopping!

Over the span of 249 pages, Brooke's takes us through an introduction of pelagic birds, explaining what they are and how they differ from our more familiar terrestrial feathered friends, and ends with a look at the interactions between seabirds and people. In between we get to experience life at sea as a pelagic bird, first hatching and leaving the nest (or scrape or burrow as the case may be), then wandering the seas as a "teenager", and finally returning to the nesting area to produce the next generation.

Chapters explore in detail the effects of wind, weather, and currents on foraging strategy and success, the predilections of individual birds and variability in behavior, how birds find food, and how birds feed. These in-depth looks at how birds interact with their environment, fill niches in the food chain, and mechanics of feeding are largely possible due to relatively new technology. The author explains what types of instruments are used, how they work, and what we've learned, and the findings are nothing short of fascinating.

By the end of the book you'll know if birds really spend their teenage years on the wing without alighting on shore, how murres get where they are going (and where they go), live the amazing journey of a chick-feeding tubenose, and understand why we don't see albatross with any regularity off the Carolinas, but regularly see South Atlantic nesting storm-petrels, European shearwaters, and Greenland-nesting Dovekies.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues>. Make change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile>. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>.

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Family.....	\$35.00
Student.....	\$15.00
Sustaining and businesses.....	\$30.00
Patron.....	\$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive \$100 installments)	\$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member).....	\$100.00

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